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# **The Car and Crime: Critical Perspectives**

**Nic Groombridge**

**PhD 1997/98**

# The Car and Crime: Critical Perspectives

A Thesis submitted for examination for a PhD at Middlesex University by Nicholas Brian  
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Submitted October 1997

**The Car and Crime: Critical Perspectives**

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgements and Dedication	3
Abstract	4
Tables	5
Introduction	6
Chapter 1      The Problem of Joyriding	11
Chapter 2      Current knowledge and findings about joyriding, motor projects and masculinities	56
Chapter 3      The Research Problem: Aims, Objectives and Scope	101
Chapter 4      Methodology and Methods	125
Chapter 5      Findings: Joyriding	154
Chapter 6      Findings: Motor Projects	178
Chapter 7      Masculinities in Criminology	204
Chapter 8      Conclusion and Policy Implications	239
Appendices	
Appendix 1 Questionnaire to agencies	270
Appendix 2 Questionnaire to TRAX members	272
Appendix 3 Questions for TRAX interviews	274
Bibliography	275



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This thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Yvonne.

## Abstract

This thesis critically examines the literature on joyriding, car crime, motor projects and masculinities. Fieldwork in motor projects combined with the methods of cultural studies locates car crime within a gendered car culture. Thus motor projects are seen to 'work' within that gendered car culture but a longer term solution to car crime is to be found in 'green' transport policies and changes in gender relations. Theoretically it recognises the reality of car crime and also the reality of the environmental consequences of car use but also the ideological context which places the car at the centre of transport policy and many men's dreams of transcendent personal freedom. It draws as many conclusions about criminology as about car crime.

Tables

page	Table	Description
31	1.1	Thefts from and of vehicles in the Cowley section of Oxford Town, Thames Valley Police from 1986 - 1992
41	1.2	TRAX Motor Project Timetable
89	2.1	Comparing the Ilderton and comparison group adapted from Wilkinson and Morgan (1995)
108	3.1	Chronology of car theft career adapted from McCorry and Morrissey (1989)
188	6.1	Jones typology of car thieves and their suitability for Motor Projects (adapted from Jones, 1993)

## INTRODUCTION

The motor car is arguably the most criminogenic device yet invented (Bottomley and Pease, 1986:12)

Since the symbolic value and use of the automobile is central to American adolescent life-styles, it seems surprising that juvenile use of cars has not received more sociological attention. (Higgins and Albrecht, 1982:39)

Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1985) note that general theories of delinquency have little to say about vehicle violations, yet disobeying traffic codes may be the most common offence among older adolescents. As the quotes illustrate the car has been identified both as criminogenic and central to the lifestyles of American youth. Yet the crimes generated by, for and with the car remain rarely studied despite the centrality of adolescent lifestyles to criminology. In the UK, Light *et al* are able to point out the “relative scarcity of significant work on the subject [car crime]” (1993:1). One reason that the car and crime has not been studied critically before may be that the car is too close to the everyday experience of researchers and therefore not worthy of the study that more distant and exotic subjects are seen to merit. Closeness raises the issue of objectivity. It is the argument of this thesis, that for most researchers - including this one - the way forward is to accept the impossibility of being objective about cars and to work with and on that subjectivity. As Naffine says:

My further concern is the deleterious effect on criminology of the conventional scientific goal of value-free research and, more particularly, how it has been interpreted (often tacitly, or unconsciously) by members of the discipline to mean that they need not consider the effects of their own identities on what they make of the work they do. (1997:26)

Car ownership, car use, the desire for a car and the pollution, disruption and loss of public transport are also not equally shared. They are skewed by class, 'race' and age. Cars continue to be owned and used disproportionately by white men over 17, and are only readily affordable by those older. As an industrial good the car is profoundly modern as are many of its problems. Indeed pollution, disruption and loss of public transport may be seen as threatening a return to the pre-modern. The car represents a 'risk' (Beck, 1992). Whilst the car is modernist its use today is iterated within the discourses of advertising and masculinity.

As a modernist discourse criminology has had difficulty in theorising the postmodern elements of the discourses around both cars and men. Both cars and criminology remain stalled within the modern but it is not enough to simply abandon modernism by the roadside and hitch a lift with postmodernism as cultural studies might suggest because as experience, and much criminology insists, the 'reality' of crime and cars persists. Paradoxically therefore both modernist and postmodern concerns, theory and method have to be used to bring a critical gaze to bear on cars and crime.

The material, modern aspects of car culture combined with the developing postmodern discourses around it combined with both the modern reality of men's lives and the discourses of gender constitute a number of potential (often temporary and overlapping) car-related gendered positions such as: the joyrider; road rage assailant; anti-roads protestor and, even the 'careful lady owner' beloved of car salesmen.

Joyriding is seen as related to aspects of both cars and masculinities which are both obscured in criminology and car culture. This study therefore initially concentrates on a specific crime committed against and with the car - 'joyriding' - but argues for a relationship to 'car culture' (hereafter to appear without scare quotes). It will be argued that such theorising as there has been about car theft has ignored both the specificity of joyriding and the wider issues of class, 'race', gender, environment and culture. Whilst many theories and findings about why joyriders 'joyride' are discussed the purpose here is less to set out an alternative proposition but to more fully understand joyriding as a practice which is deeply embedded in society with a history and meaning which cannot easily be separated from other crimes nor from legitimated activities. Like Ruggiero (1996) the 'aetiology of deficit' is challenged. Indeed what is presented here is a mundane criminology.

This study therefore investigates society, the car culture of that society, and the differing masculinities contending for dominance within society and car culture. Those masculinities, with their cross-cutting class, 'race' and sexuality aspects, make use of cars in 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' ways which tend to reproduce both dominant and subordinate masculinities. Joyriding is an example of ways in which subordinate masculinities (whether by reason of age, class and access to legitimate motoring



opportunities) share dominant masculine assumptions. Joyriding also offers the dominant masculinity opportunities to dominate that subordinate masculinity - through both punishment and rehabilitation. Seen in this way joyriding and joyriders are the narrowest focus of the research. In short this thesis is not about 'crime' as studied by positivist, administrative and correctionalist criminology. It is about the cultural practice of car use - legitimate and illegitimate - and the relations of masculinities which influences responses to illegal use. It is in part an 'outlaw' or 'border' text (Young, 1994:25). Joyriding too is a text. It is a text that can be read but it is written on the palimpsest of the streets. Its interpretation competing and combining with other texts written on the same streets, each seeking to erase each other - the joyrider, the drunk driver, the motorway madman, the sunday driver, the travelling sales-rep. And, as anti-motorway protestors remind us, the very roads themselves are written on the land.

In order to fully understand joyriding, its history, the legal sanctions against joyriding, non-legal definitions of joyriding, its prevalence and seriousness and the methods used to combat it are set out in Chapter 1. Particular attention is drawn to motor projects and the programmes they run as they seek a remedy within car culture and predominant conceptions of masculinity. The chapter draws on a number of sources to establish that there is a problem of joyriding but that it is not a new problem. Chapter 2 reviews the literature - criminological, official and popular - on joyriding and car theft more generally and solutions proposed for dealing with it - particularly the motor projects introduced in Chapter 1. As considerable emphasis is placed upon what theories of masculinity might add to the understanding of crime some of the literature on masculinity and crime are initially set out here but these are examined more extensively in Chapter 7. This is necessary groundwork because a problematised masculinity is a useful concept in studying joyriding. At the same time it seeks to raise the significance of masculinities within criminology more generally. As Naffine says of 'criminology proper is that though it is mainly about men, there is very little work done on men as men' (1997:37).

The common themes and absences found in the literature on joyriding, motor projects and masculinities are set out in Chapter 3 with propositions for filling the lacunae identified and a critique of the methods used by researchers with a narrower focus. The methods used to investigate joyriding

and car culture are set out in Chapter 4. The methods are necessarily wide and varied as it is intended to go beyond the common-sense, administrative, positivist and correctionalist theorisation of most of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. In particular the need to identify and develop an understanding of car culture requires a number of methods: observation; participant observation; driving-seat theorising and textual analysis.

The findings arising from the research are set out in Chapters 5 (Joyriding) and 6 (Motor Projects). As the formalised participant observation took place at the motor projects the fieldwork is mostly discussed in Chapter 6 but it has significance for both earlier and later chapters and informs the descriptions in Chapter 1. In part the separate findings in Chapters 5 - 7 overlap: considerations of masculinity cannot be avoided in Chapters 5 and 6 and joyriding and motor projects provide material for the discussions in Chapter 7. All of the elements are brought together in the final Chapter with car culture the overarching concept which enables both the 'problem' of joyriding and the 'solution' of the motor project to be understood. Inevitably this leads to policy conclusions and suggestions for further research which go beyond criminal justice, reaching towards a holistic understanding of both 'problem' and 'solution' which might be called ecological or Green. In short the question is not 'what to do about joyriding within our culture?'; nor even 'how can we understand joyriding within our car culture?' but 'how can we understand - and crucially - do something about our joyriding culture?' A key component of car culture is TV, newspaper and cinema advertising and narratives about cars and motoring including official and oppositional ones. These are discussed in Chapter 8. In conclusion the solution to joyriding is a change in the centrality of the car to society and to the construction of a number of masculinities. As the methods used and theories espoused are transgressive and the psycho-cultural aspects of joyriding and car use more generally involve desire the extent to which 'queer theory' can contribute to criminology is also raised.

It should be clear that joyriding or car crime - however defined - are not the totality of car culture nor, even the limit of crimes that can be committed with and against the car. For instance, consideration of women and crime prevention offers another way to examine these issues. Thus increased car use leads to increased road building and more measures such as railings and underpasses to segregate

motorists and pedestrians. These segregated spaces increase the fear of crime of the road and the speed of vehicles on the road. Women may increasingly see car ownership as a means to deal with both. This may be experienced as a liberation but just as joyriding may not be a resistance to car culture but a submission to it so women also may come, in time, to use cars in similar ways to men.



## CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM OF JOYRIDING

In this chapter the 'problem' of joyriding is considered by examining: a brief history of joyriding; the current and past legal position of joyriders; definitions of joyriding; its prevalence and seriousness; the sentencing of joyriders and; divers attempts to prevent joyriding by non-custodial means. To set this in context car culture is briefly examined below.

### car culture

Throughout this thesis considerable reference is made to car culture. It would take a whole book to set out the history and current state of car culture. McShane (1994) makes a good start on the United States experience and Wolf (1996) adds a critical European dimension but talks of 'Car Society'. Neither addresses the issue of what a car culture is in sociological terms but, like Hamilton and Hoyle, tend to take it as an existing fact. Whilst they do not engage in a sociological investigation of culture - and therefore what car culture might be - they do address some of the issues amongst the polemic:

British transport policy has been a disaster. Ours is a very car-dependent society - the most car dependent in Europe, and one of the most car-dependent in the world (the USA, Australia and Canada are the only major nations to be more dependent). We have somehow contrived a state of affairs where, for a great many families, life without a car is unthinkable, and certainly be less rich in opportunity and enjoyment. This unthinkability is not because of a lack of imagination: it is because, for most people who now have a car, to give it up would involve profound changes in life-style. (Hamilton and Hoyle, 1997:89)

Much of the following sections can be taken to be evidence of a car culture, this section offers some specific evidence for the existence of car culture, including resistance to car culture, and concludes with a brief discussion of the sociology of culture . In 1935 the Minister for Transport was able to see the speed of a vehicle as both a 'pleasure' and an 'advantage' (The Times, 4 January 1935): today speed is more clearly seen as a danger, 'Kill your speed not a child' advises a Road Safety poster advertisement campaign. In September 1997 the Government stepped up its campaign against speeding drivers by showing TV adverts

featuring children who had been killed by speeding motorists. Speed is now seen to be a danger to pedestrians but also a temptation to the owner driver and to the would be joyrider/driver. Under the headline 'Essex Man's hot hatchback finally runs out of road' Kevin Eason, Motoring Correspondent of The Times noted:

The hot hatchback car that was one of the icons of the Eighties is following Thatcherism, Yuppies and power dressing into oblivion. The Escort XR3i, the official car of "Essex Man", is to be dropped from Ford's range of models as the company trades in the Eighties' obsession with speed for a more caring image. *Sociologists could not find a better pointer to the end of the boom years than the demise of the so-called hot hatchbacks.* (emphasis added) The cars were symbols of success for a generation of motorists who wanted speed and style at bargain basement prices because they could not afford a Porsche. The flash paintwork of the Escort XR3i and its Fiesta XR2i stablemate, which cost between about £10,500 and £13,000 now, were cars to which young, upwardly mobile drivers flocked in huge numbers. And so did a new generation of thieves looking for joyriding thrills. James Duffell of Norwich Union, Britain's biggest motor insurer, said: "It was the appeal of those cars to thieves which became alarming and forced the industry to act." [...] With their spoilers and brash paintwork, the cars had also become unfashionable among a new breed of motorist, more anxious about speeding fines and theft than impressing friends. Julian Rendell, news editor of Autocar & Motor, who has studied the rise and fall of the hot hatchbacks, said: "There are a lot of high-performance cars about but they are becoming more understated." (The Times 22 January 1994)

There were faster cars than the 'hot-hatches' but the relatively low price and ease of theft made them attractive targets for those who desired their advertised speed. Moreover, the manufacturers used advertising and sponsorship of racing teams to underline the signifiers of speed on the car, such as low-profile tyres, flared wheels arches, air dams and spoilers. Equally powerful cars such as Rolls-Royces and Volvos continued to be positioned in the market, respectively as traditional and luxurious or safe and reliable. Having established that the signifiers of speed were attached to appropriate signifieds the manufacturers and car enthusiasts were able to trick out lower-powered cars with the external signs of speed allowing the bottom-of-the-range motorist to associate themselves with a top-of-the-range car.

'Hot hatches' were never a majority of cars on the road, yet they could be seen to define the fashion for cars in the late 80s early 90s. Mid-range, mid-size saloons suitable for families and 'salesmen' form the bulk of cars on the road. Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers

and Traders show that of two and quarter million cars registered in 1996 1,405,000 three and five door cars could be described as hatchbacks; but the bulk of these will be bottom and middle-range cars. However, despite the reported demise of 'hot hatches' the sale of the Golf VR6 and Escort RS sales rose 50% from 1995 to 1996 and *Autocar* reports, "No longer the victim of vicious insurance hot hatches have made a mighty comeback" (6 August 1997).<sup>1</sup> The current fashion for cars is for 'fun' vehicles such as four-wheel drive 'off-road' vehicles and 'Sierra Man' formed part of the target vote for both parties in the 1997 General Election. Indeed, such is the iconic significance of 'Sierra Man' that Hamilton and Hoyle's article (*op cit*) on transport policy is entitled 'The man in the Ford Sierra'.

Another change in car culture is the move from the poetic disquiet of Williams' *Autogeddon* (1991) to the direct action of groups that oppose road building (tree-hugging in the face of the M11 extension) and the actions of 'Reclaim the Streets' which seek to resist the car culture by temporary pedestrianising major thoroughfares (for example, Camden High St and Pentonville Rd in May and July 1995) by faking car crashes to block the roads to hold street parties. Anti-road activity has a history too; a *Punch* cartoon of 1910 shows a woman and her dog taking direct action crossing the road in London by trailing behind them spikes (on the train of her dress and on a specially designed sled respectively) to puncture the, then new, pneumatic tyre.

The 'green' perspective of this thesis shares many of the assumptions of opponents to car culture. Space precludes much more than asserting the significance of car culture to issues of car crime but some discussion of the sociology of car culture is necessary.

In introductory texts such as Giddens' *Sociology* (1989:31) culture is seen to comprise, "the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create." Clearly the car comprises a 'material good' but 'values' and 'norms' present more

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1. Thanks to Harvey Sharp of SMMT (29 September 1997) for the figures and reference to quote.



problems. Another thesis might seek to show the extent to which the car and roads are predominant in more than just transport policy; here it is only asserted that this is the case. Such a thesis would require the untangling of ideological issues and address the extent to which the social formation is congruent with car culture and the ideological work it does. It might also address the extent to which car ownership or use now represents, not a marker of class but represents a structural cleavage in its own right.

Giddens' discussion of culture takes an anthropological turn in setting out these cultural universals: language; family system; marriage; religious rituals; property rights and incest prohibitions (1989:39). Again no attempt is made to map car use - legal or illegal - onto these categories though motor shows and car show rooms might be seen as evidence of an organised religion with its own churches. Barthes, inspired by the Citroen DS (homophonically *Déesse*, or Goddess), likened the cars to Gothic cathedrals:

the supreme creation of an era, conceived with passion by unknown artists, and consumed in image by a whole population which appropriates them as a purely magical object. (1973:95)

Others are less prescriptive in their definitions of culture, as Adam and Allan bemoan, "the word 'culture', in contrast, seems to be appearing everywhere, its meaning stretched to the point that attempts to specify the non-cultural run into severe difficulties" (1995:xiii).

Functionalist sociology might see car culture as offering mobility and the opportunity to maintain family life over greater distances. Marxists might see it as serving international capitalism with pollution and congestion as the contradiction - 'grave-diggers'? - that foreshadows revolution. Following Hall I acknowledge:

the deeply cultural character of the revolution of our times. If 'post-Fordism' exists, then it is as much a description of cultural as of economic change. Indeed, the distinction is now quite useless. Culture has ceased (if it ever was - which I doubt) to be a decorative addendum to the 'hard world' of production and things, the icing on the cake of the material world' (1989:128)

In *Profane Culture* Willis (1978a) talks of 'motor-bike culture' but his recognition of the

symbolic significance of the motor bike is within the context of the youth club or the sub-culture. Here my intention is to show the significance of the car for the whole of society in both material and ideological senses.

It is, perhaps, evidence of car culture that previous studies of joyriding have so readily accepted the naturalness and inevitability of the car as an object, ignoring its symbolic and material effects. It is this taken-for-grantedness that necessitates the lengths to which this research goes to denaturalize the car and deconstruct its meanings for researched, researcher and wider society.

### A brief history of joyriding

Most books about cars are hagiographies of celebrated marques. Most histories of the car are well illustrated coffee-table books with little critical content. It is not appropriate to provide a full history of the car or the crimes committed with it or for it but it is important to give a historical context to joyriding. Set out below are some examples drawn from a limited number of sources that illustrate that joyriding has a long history and that responses to it have been very similar.

In view of the moral outrage against joyriders it is tempting to attempt to do for joyriding what Pearson (1983) did for hooliganism; to go back 20 years to a 'Golden Age' and discover that the Golden Age was located a further 20 years ago and so on to infinity. It might also be tempting to do for joyriding what Hall *et al* (1978) did for mugging; to see joyriding as a metaphor for a crisis in the State or at least in car culture.<sup>2</sup> If there was a 'Golden Age' without joyriding it was 100 years ago before the car was invented. However, horse drawn vehicles too could be a dangerous nuisance; and horse theft and 'cart-jacking' have long histories.

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2. The release of the film of J. G Ballard's novel *Crash* came too late for substantive inclusion in Chapter 8's discussion of cultural representations of car culture. The anxiety it provoked could be seen as being about the car and not about sex. That is the debate centred on sex but, perhaps, the unspoken fear was about the car. If the car is a taboo subject then this might explain the absence of work that directly addresses car crime.

Literature provides some historical evidence of concerns about the car and the ease with which it can be stolen. Kenneth Grahame - in 1908<sup>3</sup> - in *Wind in the Willows* has Toad (of Toad Hall) saying at the sight of his first car "The poetry of motion, the real way to travel! The only way to travel!" Silk (1984) has pointed out the similarity between Toad's enthusiasm for the Motor Car and the Futurist Manifesto of Marinetti, or indeed the advertising of Henry Ford:

It is your say, too, when it comes to speed. You can - if you chose - loiter lingeringly through shady avenues or you can press down on the foot-lever until all the scenery looks alike and you keep your eyes skinned to count the milestones as they pass. (in Wolf, 1996:194)

Toad's enthusiasm for the motor car lead him to become a joyrider. The following description could be taken from conversation with a modern joyrider gathered in fieldwork - or a motor-sport enthusiast!

'There cannot be any harm' he said to himself 'my just looking at it!' The car stood in the middle of the yard, quite unattended, the stable-helpers and the other hangers-on being all at their dinner. Toad walked slowly round it, inspecting, criticizing, musing deeply. 'I wonder, he said to himself presently 'I wonder if this sort of car starts easily?' Next moment, hardly knowing how it came about, he found he had hold of the handle and was turning it. As the familiar sound broke forth, the old passion seized on Toad and completely mastered him, body and soul. As if in a dream he found himself, somehow, seated in the driver's seat; as if in a dream he pulled the lever and swung the car round the yard and out through the archway; and as if a dream, all sense of right and wrong, all fear of obvious consequences, seemed temporarily suspended. (Grahame 1992:38-139)

After a brush with the criminal justice and penal systems - pantomime police, magistrates and Justice's Clerk and a dungeon of Piranesian gloom - Toad escapes dressed as a washerwoman and adds 'carjacking' to his crimes. Carjacking is the practice of taking a car from the owner whilst they are in it. Some would argue that the increased security of cars has lead to this displacement of crime from car park to traffic light. This violent criminal escalation also represents a reduction in the craft skills of the car thief. Toad, however, uses artifice rather than force. He hears a car on the road and imagines himself getting a lift and being driven up to Toad Hall. It is the same car that he had stolen before but his disguise fools the owner who,

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3. The book first published 8 October 1908 was made up of stories told to Grahame's son from 1904.



affected by his distressed state, gives him a lift. Eventually he talks himself into the passenger seat. The following quote illustrates Toad's Auto-determinism. Toad clearly believed that the very beauty of the car caused him to steal them when his friends prevented him from buying another (after many crashes).

"It's fate," he said to himself, "Why strive? Why struggle?" and he turned to the driver at his side 'Please Sir,' he said, 'I wish you would kindly let me try and drive the car for a little. I've been watching you carefully, and it looks so easy and so interesting, and I should like to tell my friends that once I had driven a motor-car!' [...] The gentlemen behind clapped their hands and applauded, and Toad heard them saying, 'How well she does it! Fancy a washer woman driving a car as well as that, the first time!' Toad went a little faster; then faster still, and faster. He heard the gentlemen call out warningly, 'Be careful, washerwoman! And this annoyed him and he began to lose his head. The driver tried to interfere, but he pinned him down in his seat with one elbow, and put on full speed. The rush of air in his face, the hum of the engine, and the light jump of the car beneath him intoxicated his weak brain. 'Washerwoman, indeed!' he shouted recklessly, 'Ho! Ho! I am Toad, the motor-car snatcher, the prison-breaker, the Toad who always escapes! Sit still, and you shall know what driving really is, for you are in the hands of the famous, the skilful, the entirely fearless Toad! (Grahame 1992:240-242)

It is not clear precisely where Grahame's sympathies lie. Toad's friends are consistently hostile even to his legal driving. At the book's denouement Toad sends a handsome gift to the gaoler's daughter who arranged his escape. An engine driver is "thanked and compensated" for helping him out run the police and a bargewoman who he stole a horse off is "sought out and the value of her horse discreetly made good to her" No mention is made of his unexpired prison term or the wrecked car.

Whatever Grahame's attitude to the car or to its theft the whole story is treated and fondly remembered as a comedy: Toad is really just silly and unjustifiably proud - an amphibian Bertie Wooster. A different take on this English interpretation is provided by McShane who notes that Disney World has ride a on the theme of Toad of Toad Hall but describes "Mr Toad, as the model of the evil car-loving plutocrat" (1994:144).

Ten years after *Wind in the Willows* is first published; the Commissioner for Police of the Metropolis noted:

..larcenies of motor cars and vans have been frequent. These, again, are in a large measure due to the carelessness of owners. The best remedy in this case is an improvement in the system of registration which might be so arranged as to make the disposal of a stolen car extremely difficult. (Metropolitan Police 1919:12).

The Commissioner's exhortation to motorists could come from the Home Office's publicity for Car Crime Prevention Years 1992 and 1993. The blame is put on the owner<sup>4</sup>; no mention is made of joyriders though the term was known by then (Partridge, 1984).

In 1921 the Commissioner again returns to car crime, "If insurance companies and underwriters would combine to put their assured on stricter terms much crime of this and other kinds would be avoided.", and, "Thefts of motor cars are somewhat numerous", unfortunately, "the new system of registration ...has not yet had the desired results.." Of the 624 cars and motor cycles reported stolen that year 394 had been left unattended.<sup>5</sup> Clearly not everyone could afford a chauffeur. Parking was then a substantial problem and more space in each of the Commissioner's reports is given over to the problems of growing traffic.<sup>6</sup>

Flower and Jones (1981:74) found owners complained that Chauffeurs took cars without their consent and took other servants on joyrides; and that in 1905 a magistrate blamed Chauffeurs for 75% of accidents. Yet at that time chauffeurs were certificated by manufacturers, unlike the owner/driver suggesting some class bias in the magistrates views. Pettifer and Turner (1984:219-220) quote an article titled "Get After the Chauffeurs" in *Life Magazine* 1906 which suggested the public hanging in Madison Sq of reckless drivers. The article concluded "Is homicide by automobile so much less culpable than homicide with a gun?" Williams (1991)

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4. What Garland (1996) calls a strategy of 'responsibilization'.

5. Webb and Laycock (1992) note that until 1932 it was illegal to leave a car locked in public places.

6. From time to time the Commissioner congratulates himself on the acquisition of new cars (the origins of the 'Flying Squad') to combat crime and traffic problems. This escalation of car use to prevent car crime is fully in line with this the emphasis in this thesis on car culture but cannot be addressed here, other than to note the often shared masculinities of joyriders and police.



makes the same point in his anti-car epic poem which imagines an alien untutored in the ways of the car visiting Earth:

The Visitor follows up on the court reports:  
 Hit someone over the head with a discarded chrome fender  
 And kill them:  
 Life.  
 Take the precaution of attaching the fender to a car  
 And kill them:  
 Six months,  
 License to drive briefly suspended.

In 1926 (Metropolitan Police) 1,092 cars were stolen in England and Wales of which 941 were recovered. In London 809 cars were stolen of which 698 were recovered, again prompting the Commissioner to comment, "In a very large proportion the motor car or cycle was left unattended in the street, and the larceny might have been prevented had some precaution been taken by the owner.", and

If Insurance Companies would combine in measures to encourage persons who leave cars unattended in the streets to take reasonable precautions, such as securing some part which is vital to the movement of the car, they would substantially reduce the opportunities for theft at present so frequently offered by motor car owners." (Metropolitan Police 1926:16)

In 1928, when in Great Britain cars stolen numbered 2,213 of which 2,042 were recovered, the Commissioner was wrestling with the evidential problems of car theft:

Statistics regarding motor cars, etc, lost or stolen present peculiar difficulties. During the year as many as 1,844 cars and 276 motor cycles were reported to the Commissioner's Office as stolen in the MPD. But of these 1709 cars and 124 cycles were subsequently found, generally within a few hours of their loss, and under circumstances which would make a charge of theft impossible, even if the culprits were discovered...In many cases the object is only a *pleasure jaunt*, but cases where the vehicle is used for the commission of a crime are by no means infrequent. (my emphasis) (Metropolitan Police 1928:16)

In the 1930 Report the continuing problem of taking and driving away and owner indifference is mentioned but section 28 of the Road Traffic Act 1930 is seen to hold out some hope.<sup>7</sup> The

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7. It created the offence of taking and driving away (TDA ).

car crime figures for London now outweighed those for the whole of Great Britain two years previously; 4,941 cars were stolen and 4,759 were recovered. In 1931, the first full year of the RTA 1930, there were 186 TDA convictions. But still in 1933 the Commissioner says, "...it cannot be too strongly impressed on motorists that if they leave their cars so they can be easily driven away they are offering facilities for the commission of crime." (Metropolitan Police 1933:33)

The Road Traffic Act 1934 introduced a 30 mph limit for cars in built up areas from 18 March 1935. The Commissioner complained of local benches that they seemed reluctant to convict, thinking a margin over the legal limit may well have been allowed. Under the headline 'METHOD ON THE ROADS' The Times (4 January 1935) reported:

Mr. Hore-Belisha, Minister of Transport, broadcasting in the National programme at 9.20 p.m. last night, said:- New drivers of mechanical vehicles will have to prove from April next, as engine drivers and pilots now do, their capacity and skill and their knowledge of the mechanism for which they assume responsibility. [...] To be able to travel at speed is a pleasant sensation and an advantage which this generation possesses. But surely no one can claim to enjoy this pleasure and profit by this advantage in circumstances which endanger other people. In a built-up area 30 miles an hour should be a maximum, and I propose to make it so. I am asking the local authorities to expedite their arrangements for marking their areas.

The Commissioner's report for 1940 notes that black-out conditions and petrol rationing decreased car theft but increased bike theft. The 1946 report distinguishes theft from taking away (ie recovered within 2 days). That year in London 2,093 cars were recorded as stolen though 1,315 were recovered but 9,984 were reported stolen of which 9,241 were recovered. The tables accompanying that year's report records that 16.5% of those convicted of 'larceny of motor' were under 17 and 35.7% 17-21. The increased numbers of cars on the road lead to rising car crime figures even when recorded crime more generally fell. Recorded crime fell three years running in 1952, 53 and 54 - when it fell below the pre-War figure.

Car crime had continued to rise up to the war as did car ownership but the Commissioner did not return to the subject until 1957 when he complained that:



Many of these vehicles are used in the commission of crime: often, driven by uninsured drivers involving innocent people. The offence of stealing or 'taking and driving away' a motor vehicle is in my view an extremely serious one; the manner in which the offenders are often dealt with by the courts does not afford an effective deterrent. (Metropolitan Police 1957:9)

By 1965 the numbers of motor vehicles stolen in London was 7,284 and 39,553 were Taken and Driven Away (TDA). In 1974 'autocrime' (particularly taking away) was up 50% from 4 years previously with 58,025 thefts and TDAs.

Whilst autocrime continued to worsen it was not until 1986 that the Commissioner was again moved to note, contradicting the 1926 report: "at one time, unattended vehicles in the street were a rare sight" (Metropolitan Police 1986:39). He reflects the thoughts of his predecessors when he goes on to say, "A more thoughtful approach to the security of vehicles and contents by both the public and vehicle manufacturers is undoubtedly the most effective way of securing a substantive decrease in crime." Nonetheless, 'Autocrime' was dropped that year from being a specific Force priority as he was not satisfied that "the investment of police resources had resulted in sufficient public benefit."

Joyriding has been given considerable prominence by the media and Parliament but the most recent peak was the summer of 1991 when 'riots' in a number of places, but particularly the Blackbird Leys Estate in Oxford and the Meadowell Estate on Tyneside, were accompanied by spectacular displays of joyriding that were known as 'hotting' or 'frisking' (Campbell, 1993). Two councillors in Oxford (Groombridge, 1994) regretted the extent to which the Blackbird Leys Estate had come to be labelled by the media. This and the media 'feeding frenzy' resulted in a toughening up of the legislation with the passing of the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1991. Some researchers<sup>8</sup> note a change during this year in the media coverage of accidents involving joyriders from sympathetic to condemnatory. Where once the media may have spoken of a 'tragic' death caused by a joyrider they moved to speak of 'brutal', 'mad' or 'callous' joyriders.

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8. Personal communication, Barry Goldson, University of Liverpool and a point made by Ian Taylor in discussing joyriding in Salford (The Guardian, 14 May 1997).

A typical example of coverage by a broadsheet paper is as follows:

A Woman of 25 [...] was clearing snow from her car one morning last Christmas when two youths smashed their stolen car into her. She was left lying in the road, her leg horribly mutilated. The youths showed no remorse, no sense of guilt. They fled like cowards, leaving their victim bleeding badly and without caring if she lived or died. Her leg was amputated and last week she won the heart of the nation when she spoke bravely of her will to get on with her life in spite of her terrible disability.

And

On Friday night Lord Weir, chairman of Scotland's biggest engineering company, became another victim of the car-crime madness. He was recovering in hospital yesterday after a stolen car driven by three men smashed into his Jaguar while he was returning home on the Glasgow to Ayr road. The three occupants of the stolen car were killed. These are sickening stories of needless death and injury caused by those seeking cheap thrills. Cars are being stolen every minute at a frightening rate. Foolish boys, and men who are no more than boys, consider it entertaining to steal other people's property and put other lives in danger. The joyriding epidemic goes on in spite of reforms aimed at toughening up sentencing and the introduction of new laws laughably intended to deter the culprits. (Sunday Times 11 September 1994 'Deliver us from evil' )

Amongst the condemnatory rhetoric is some recognition that joyriding is fun and that it is young men - 'foolish boys, and men who are no more than boys' - that are mainly to be blamed. The abusive and belittling adjective 'foolish', the equating of men with boys and possibly the unspoken corollary that the boys want to be men all suggest an implicit critique of certain masculinities. Yet, it is a critique mounted from within masculinity. The leader writer is laying down the law - 'the law of the father'. Moreover it is a critique delivered from within car culture since it fails to connect the accidents to the way that the cars are driven which shares all too much with the way that owners drive their cars. Whilst some of the concerns of the media were shared by my interviewees (Groombridge, 1994) one opined that the amount of joyriding was related to media coverage and eleven (out of three magistrates, four social workers and twelve probation officers) questioned agreed that the media caused car crime.

### The legal position of joyriding

There is no United Kingdom (the three jurisdictions of England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) offence called joyriding and therefore no official statistics for it. Hall *et al*



(1978) show how 'mugging' was constructed from a number of disparate offences by the State and media. Joyriding is no less constructed but from a more unified body of offences related to the theft of a car. Whilst joyriding is dealt with as a type of theft, the public concern is often with the way in which the stolen car is driven. It is therefore appropriate to set out some general history of motoring law up to the point when joyriding attracted specific legislative attention before moving to discuss the law specifically relating to joyriding. In the discussion below Plowden (1971), Kriefman (1975) and Holroyd (1992) are relied on for the history of motoring law and successive Governments' failure to control the car or the criminality of owners and users alike. The history is selective, not all legislation or policy discussion is mentioned. The point is to show some of the continuities with today but also occasional differences.

The Stage Carriage Act 1832 was the first Act to concern itself with the way that vehicles were driven on the road. It included measures against driving whilst intoxicated, negligently or furiously. The Town Police Clauses Act 1847 strengthened the law on driving a horse or carriage furiously (see Chapter 8 for its ongoing application). The Locomotive Act 1861 set a speed limit of 10 mph for locomotives (early steam driven vehicles like traction engines) in the country and 4 mph in town. The Offences Against the Person Act 1861 made wanton or furious driving or racing punishable with up to 2 years hard labour. Such was the concern of Parliament that speed limits were cut by the Locomotive Act 1865 to 4 mph in the country and 2 mph in town; it also called for 3 attendants and a red flag. The speed limit was raised again - to 14 mph - by the Locomotives on Highways Acts 1896.

These speed limits and other rules of the road were not obeyed. The very first use of a car for a long journey was made by Bertha Benz in 1888 when she drove the car (without Carl's consent!) the 62 miles there and back to her home from Mannheim (Flower & Jones, 1981). *Autocar* Magazine (1 November 1995) notes "On 3 July 1895 the Hon. Evelyn Ellis flouted the law and became the first man to drive a car in Britain". There were dissenting voices though, a leader in the Times, 15 December 1890, complained:

...there are a number of drivers who are a curse to the neighbourhood in which they drive....drivers who seem, when they mount their cars, to put from them altogether the instincts of gentlemen.

Parliamentary debate on the 1903 Motor Car Act centred on whether the test of criminal driving should be subjective - such as recklessly driving - or objective - such as exceeding the speed limit. The supporters of motoring argued that it was bad drivers that were the problem not speed. This mirrors the argument of the gun lobby that it is not guns that kill. The subtext was that gentlemen could - and should - decide their capabilities whilst on the road and only explain them to other gentlemen on the bench. Objective tests such as speeding put gentlemen within the ambit of the police, who may recognize a gentleman but also recognised their duty to the law. There may no longer be any 'gentlemen' but drivers still ask the police, when stopped for traffic offences, 'haven't you any real criminals to chase?'. Though the Bill originally proposed abolishing the speed limit the Act included a 20 mph speed limit and a dangerous driving clause. This Act was renewed occasionally up to 1930. Since then new Acts have increased the number of offences and new ways of detecting them such as the breathalyser and the speed camera.

Section 28 of the Road Traffic Act (RTA) 1930 created the offence known as 'taking and driving away' or more correctly taking and driving away "any motor vehicle without having consent of the owner thereof or other lawful authority" ; the maximum penalty was twelve months imprisonment. A vehicle that was unrecovered after 48 hours was considered stolen. The law on TDA remained essentially unchanged until 1968 except that in 1960 the period for recovery was extended to one calendar month. The RTA 1934 saw the introduction of the driving test. In 1962 the RTA emphasised disqualification as a penalty. Endorsements were made mandatory and disqualification discretionary for TDA and theft of a vehicle. A passenger also became liable under this act if "knowing that a motor vehicle has been so taken...drives it or allows himself to be carried in or on it".

The Theft Act 1968 amended descriptions of car crime - under section 12 Taking and Driving



Away became Taking Without Consent (TWOC) - and more notably redefined the offence from motoring law to theft. It was a triable-either-way offence with a maximum of three years imprisonment. However, the Criminal Justice Act 1988 s37(1) redefined it as a summary offence with a six month maximum penalty. This was due to the pressure of business on the Courts but it can be argued that it sent 'a message' to joyriders that their offence was considered less serious. However, given the young age at which joyriders start the adult penalties are not the most appropriate guide. There was a rise in TWOC from 1988 (but after a fall in 1987) and in line with prevailing upward trend of recorded crime. The major change appears to have occurred from the late 60s, before which time the rate was proportionate to the rise in the numbers of vehicles on the road (Webb and Laycock, 1992).

Despite the ongoing rise in car crime the law remained as it was until the passing of the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992. On the Second Reading of the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act 1992 (AVTA) the, then, Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker, said that it would "... give the courts the power to sentence the serious cases in the way that they deserve"(Hansard cols 620-701). This was because s12 Theft Act 1968 was not seen to carry sufficient penalties. Moreover, if damage was discovered upon recovery of the vehicle it was difficult to determine who might be held responsible.

Section 1 of the AVTA 1992 inserted a new section 12A into the Theft Act 1968 creating the new offence of "aggravated taking of a mechanically propelled vehicle" which is triable either way. This aggravated offence is committed in certain aggravating circumstances by the person committing the basic offence of TWOC. These occur at any time between the vehicle being taken and being recovered and are: a) that the vehicle is driven dangerously on the road or other public place; b) that an injury causing accident arises from the driving of the vehicle; c) that damage is caused to property other than the vehicle and; d) that damage is caused to the vehicle.<sup>9</sup> The intention of the driver or passengers are not relevant. The only defence is that

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9. The same definition of dangerous as is used in the RTAs i.e. that the vehicle "is driven in a way which falls below what would be expected of a careful and competent driver, and it would be obvious to a careful and competent driver that driving the vehicle in that way would be

the aggravating circumstance occurred before they took the vehicle or they were not in on near the vehicle when the aggravated circumstance occurred.

The penalties available to the Crown Court are two years or five years if an aggravating accident causes death. There also existed the offence of causing death by reckless driving (s1 RTA 1988) now replaced by causing death by dangerous driving (s1 RTA 1991) but these are triable only on indictment following reckless or dangerous behaviour yet the triable either way offence can arise by accident. Where damage does not exceed £2,000 the offence is only summary which may leave repairers estimates having a significant place in mode of trial decisions. All 12A cases carry obligatory disqualification and endorsement of 3 - 11 points upon the licence.

At the time, Holroyd (1992) summarised the main Parliamentary objections as being:

- that it created a legal lottery in the random outcomes of any taking - though this element of risk is intended to add to the deterrent effect
- and that it would not deter, particularly as the 15-17 year old offender can only be sentenced to a maximum of 12 months (CJA 1991) and those under 14 not subject to custodial sentences
- that the current law was adequate

It should also be noted that the Act was passed in one day (9 December 1991). The speed with which previous policy was overturned bears comparison with the about turn on the 'just deserts' philosophy of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 after only six months in operation.

### A definition of joyriding

Partridge (1984) identifies the word 'joyride' as first used in a criminal sense in the United States in 1909 and in 1912 for the UK. West and Farrington (1977:36) are no radicals but note that TDA is "aptly named 'joyriding' ". Yet it is common for press, Ministers and, more

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dangerous".



understandably, relatives of deceased road users to make observations like, 'there is no joy in joyriding.' However, these denunciations do not help to us understand joyriding.

As can be seen from the brief history of the legal position there is no crime of joyriding but popular, official and criminological literature is full of references to it or descriptions of activities that are recognisable as joyriding. For all its deficiencies, the offence of Aggravated Vehicle Taking gets close to summing up popular and media representations of joyriding, but nowhere near the complexities that this study presents. This is no coincidence as the law was specifically drafted to deal with the offence as pictured by the media. Statistics for conviction for this offence, however, are a poor guide to the extent of joyriding for all the usual reasons such as non-reporting and non-conviction (Bottomley and Pease, 1986) but additionally because joyriding may well be a component of other more serious offences which do get recorded, or as shall be argued, a characteristic of much 'normal' driving by the owners of vehicles.

It should be clear that joyriding is not a unified transhistorical description. Originally the expression joyriding did not have criminal connotations but referred to a trip in an aeroplane or car for non-utilitarian (and therefore unecological) reasons. The original connotation must still have some resonance as a motor dealer in North London trades under the name Joyride.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, even past criminal connotations have emphasised the joyful element of joyriding and not accorded it the status of fully 'criminal' even though it is now covered by theft not motoring legislation. Now, however, the 'joyrider' is a fully-fledged 'folk devil' whereas motoring offences posing similar or greater dangers continue to be downplayed by many despite the fulminations of Ministers and the campaigning efforts of groups like RoadPeace, the Campaign Against Drink Driving and Mothers Against Drink Driving.

In Chapter 2 some time will be spent in discussing various typologies of joyriding which seek to set out a number of different types of joyriding. These generally do not seek to define

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10. 300 Green Lanes N13

joyriding itself but to identify types of car theft which might properly be called joyriding and distinguish them from those which might not, primarily because of a clear instrumental reason for the theft of the car rather than an expressive one.

It is clear that joyriding - even if only indicated by responses to it - is a dynamic phenomenon beyond the obviousness of use of the car by someone not authorised to use it. It is argued here that joyriding itself or representations of it in popular or criminological usage have changed over time and may even differ between areas of the country or between countries. It is beyond the scope of this study to attempt a full comparison between different countries, car cultures and varieties of illegal car use. Whilst it is clear that something recognisable as joyriding occurs in all countries with cars it is not clear that precisely the same processes are at work.

The United States is the paradigm car culture but cars are cheaper and available legally at a younger age so taking cars purely for fun seems less likely. Car ownership rates in Holland are similar to the UK but car use is less (walking, cycling and public transport are still highly favoured). Some of these might be expected to feed into the different rates of victimisation reported in these countries. For example, in 1988 2.4% of English and Welsh car owners had their car stolen, 2.2% of Americans but only 0.4% of Dutch; whereas thefts from cars shows a different pattern with 7.3% of English and Welsh owners being victimised, 9.7% of Americans and 6.8% of Dutch. Yet vandalism to cars shows a different pattern again with 8.8% of English and Welsh, 9.3% of Americans and 10.6% of Dutch (Van Dijk, Mayhew and Killias, 1990 ).

None of this can be directly related to joyriding but it does raise the supposition that car crime (and therefore joyriding, though not in any simple proportion) differs around the world.

International comparisons indicate the widespread nature of the problem but not its specificity. Case studies within and between countries might indicate which elements of a car culture effect the amount and type of joyriding. Canadian studies (Tremblay *et al*, 1994) relate reductions in joyriding in Quebec to reductions in the numbers of 15-24 year olds, increased vehicle ownership and increased security. In their study joyriding is contrasted with 'jockeying'



(professional theft) but neither are defined and proxies are used to measure them, recovered cars standing in for joyriding and unrecovered cars for jockeying. Yet joyridden vehicles may not be recovered for a number of reasons such as being set alight and insurance frauds by owners of vehicles account for a substantial proportion of unrecovered cars. In the UK Webb and Laycock (1992) estimate that 65% of theft is for casual use (and therefore roughly equivalent to joyriding broadly defined), 27% professional theft and 8% insurance fraud.

These very brief international comparisons and the history of joyriding and the legislation should show that there are a number of meanings to joyriding. This study is an attempt to understand some of these meanings and to suggest connections between them. A particular concern is to come to understand the joyriding that provoked the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act and its relationship to car culture. It is argued that car culture valorises the ownership and use of the car for pleasure; making joydrivers if not joyriders of all car owners. Moreover, in theory and in practice it is difficult to separate out illegal joyriding from other illegal car use and theft. Part of the intention of this study is to explore these different meanings, to deconstruct the popular and penal discourses which assume an ahistorical joyriding which is dealt with by a 'criminology of the other' - punishment and demonisation of joyriders - or a 'criminology of the self' - the owner's responsibility to protect their car (Garland, 1996).

In this section it has only been possible to hint at much of the argument to come in later chapters. The next section therefore necessarily employs a 'common-sense' definition of joyriding to illustrate the reality of the problem.

### Current reality of joyriding

In as much as this thesis is informed by left realism, the 'reality' of joyriding is accepted - though problematised by issues of gender and the environment. This section sets out some of the reality of car crime using figures from both national and local victimisation surveys and recorded crime figures. The national victimisation figures from the British Crime Survey are

given to show the full extent of car crime, though recorded crime figures for car theft are very close to the victimisation figures because of the need to report required by insurance companies. The recorded crime figures, both national and local, indicate the scale of the pressure on the police. The Thames Valley Police area, particularly the Cowley area, has been chosen for the local figures because of the interest sparked by the events on Blackbird Leys Estate during 1991.<sup>11</sup> The Islington Crime Surveys are used to show some of the impact of car crime and judge it against other crimes and incivilities. Crime statistics even where augmented by victims surveys only record the incidence of victimisation not its impact. This too is briefly discussed.

The 1992 British Crime Survey found that one in five car owners had been the victims of car crime in 1991, 3% had their car stolen, 12% had something stolen from their car and 5% suffered an attempt on their car. Car crimes constituted 36% of crimes picked up by the survey, a total of nearly 5.5 million offences against private owners. Amongst thefts of motor cars and taking without consent it is not possible to tell whether the reason was for joyriding, professional theft or to defraud insurance companies. The BCS shows a drop in percentage of cars recovered from 83% in 1981 to 76% in 1991 suggesting that professional and insurance theft are rising faster than joyriding.

The 1992 British Crime Survey (Home Office, 1993a) reveals that from the period 1981 to 1991 car vandalism had increased by only 7% but attempted theft of or from cars had risen 395% from 180,000 to 890,000. Showing increases between figures, but clearly related, are theft from cars up 86% and theft of cars up 81%. Those figures represent extrapolations from self-reported victimisation and therefore reveal otherwise 'hidden' car crime. Turning to reported crime at a local level: the Oxford area in the Thames Valley Police area shows for the calendar years 1990, 1991 and 1992 rises of thefts from vehicles as follows: 2,934; 4,283 and 4,533. For thefts from the figures are: 2,395; 2,911 and 3,437. Focussing on the smaller

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11. The figures were kindly provided by Thames Valley Police during the course of an evaluation of the TRAX Motor Project. They will be referred to as (TVP 1994) in the text.



area which attracted the media headlines we find that the Cowley section recorded the figures in the table 1.1. below.

Table 1.1 Thefts from and of vehicles in the Cowley section of Oxford Town, Thames Valley Police from 1986 - 1992 adapted from (TVP, 1994)

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
from	902	912	810	1,198	1,697	2,450	2,586
of	747	687	747	1,181	1,509	1,600	1,862

The recorded crime figures for the period July 1993 to June 1994 (Home Office 1994a) show that vehicle crimes fell by 9% to 1.4 million, including 570,300 thefts of vehicles, whereas the total of all crimes fell by 5%. In the Thames Valley area the overall fall was below the national average ( at 4%) doing only slightly better with vehicle crime at 5%. By way of comparison the City of London cut car crime (obviously from a smaller base and with the help of anti-terrorist measures) but six forces had an increase in car crime (Humberside fared worse with a 9% increase). Thames Valley (TVP,1994) continue to have an above average (27%) percentage of its notifiable offence caseload comprising vehicle crime (32%). We find in the ten months from Jan-Oct 1993 that the Thames Valley Police recorded: 36,925 offences of theft from a motor vehicle;19,612 thefts of a motor vehicle; 139 cases of Aggravated Vehicle Taking and 1 death by aggravated vehicle taking. Narrowing the focus to the Oxford area we find: 3,811 thefts from cars recorded; 2,903 thefts of, 15 aggravated vehicle taking with no deaths. In Cowley the figures are: 1,739 thefts from; 1,637 thefts of; and ten aggravated taking. These figures give some extent of the scale of the problem but more context is needed.

The total of notifiable crimes recorded in the Thames Valley Police area for the same ten months was 167,875 so the combined total of thefts from, thefts of and aggravated taking (56,676) constitutes 33.76% of recorded crime<sup>12</sup>. For the Oxford area car crime (6,729) constitutes 31.39% and for Cowley 3,386 car crimes represent 31.11%. The way these are made up is interesting. For 1992 in England and Wales the police recorded 1,546,841 thefts

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12. The clear up rate force wide was during the same period was 9.26% for thefts from and 15.49% for thefts of cars. In Cowley the figures were 5.86% and 23.34% respectively.

from or of cars with theft from cars (961,340) nearly double that for thefts of cars (585,501) (TVP, 1994).

The Cowley area is remarkable in that thefts of nearly outweigh thefts from, whereas in the Oxford area the pattern is much closer to the national one with 2,072 thefts from and 1,266 thefts of. Again in Cowley 'Other criminal damage' is the largest category of offence (2,403) with theft from (1,739) second and theft of (1,637) third with burglary in a dwelling fourth (1,175) and theft of a pedal cycle (1,031) fifth whereas for the whole of Thames Valley the rank order is theft from (36,925); other criminal damage (24,401); theft of (19,612); other theft (18,183) and fifth burglary in a dwelling (17,895). Within Cowley nearly one sixth of thefts of vehicles (559) were from the beat area known as Headington BC30 whereas the figures for all four beats covering Blackbird Leys the figure was 283 (TVP 1994). A disproportionate number of car thefts is consistent with joyriding but also professional theft or insurance frauds.

So Cowley can be seen to be different to the surrounding area and the national pattern. It has more thefts of cars but also more thefts of pedal cycles. The relationship between car theft and cycle theft has yet to be made but anecdotally evidence Dutch experience is that a high cycle theft rate is correlated with a low car theft. This may suggest a higher proportion of thefts for short-term use by Dutch thieves - and therefore a bike will do. It is more likely that bikes are stolen in the UK for profit not for 'joycycling' or getting home. What is clear is that Cowley has a bike theft problem. The comparisons with cycle theft are not entirely whimsical. Cycles are a form of transport and public transport is seen as a potential preventer of car crime where the motive is getting home. The Guardian (14 September 1994) reported that according to the 1991 Census nationwide the most common way to travel to work was by car. This shows 67% of men use cars to travel to work. Cambridge (24%) and Oxford (19%) were picked out for their high use of bicycles for travel to work.

Nationally 78% of those found guilty of or cautioned for taking without consent and 60% of those who stole cars were aged 10-20 (Home Office, 1994b). In the Thames Valley Police area



for the period January 1993 to the end of September 1993 the age of the principal offender of all notifiable offences cleared up was under 21 for 1,962 offences of theft from a vehicle and 1,976 for thefts of a motor vehicle. This represents 57.37% and 65.04% respectively. One under 10 is recorded as being responsible for a theft of a motor vehicle. The peak age for thefts of was 17 and 20 for thefts from. The peak for bicycle thefts was also 17. Shoplifting, however, at 4,422 offences was most popular amongst this age group. Both thefts of and from drop off with age though one over 70 year old was recorded for each offence. Specifically in the Cowley section for this period 13 was the youngest and the under 21s formed 59.77% of thefts from vehicles but 86.61% of thefts of vehicles. (TVP 1994)

The Second Islington Crime Survey (Crawford *et al*, 1989) asked respondents about: car ownership; stops by the police in their car; the priority that should be given by the police to theft of motor cars; experience as a witness of car crime; experience as a victim of car crime; the sentencing of reckless drivers and knowledge of car crime. Considering the extent of these questions and the interest in car crime the coverage in the final report is disappointing. In summary 49% of men but only 30% of women owned a motor vehicle. 16% reported being in a car stopped by police. The reasons given by the police were: Speeding 19%, Other Behaviour 23%, Vehicle Defect 18% and Routine Check 11%. 54% of women and 52% of men favoured custodial sentences for 'Reckless Driving Causing Accident in Which someone is Badly Hurt', 19% favoured a sentence less than one year, 24% a sentence of 1-5 years, 10% over 5 years and 11% suspended/probation. Of those not favouring imprisonment 24% favoured compensation to the victim and 6% a fine. The retributive note is seen to "reflect their feelings of vulnerability when faced with the prospect of a drunken driver in 'control' of a solid steel killing machine." (1989:142)

'Public Assessment of Order of Policing Priorities' placed Sexual Assaults on Women first and Drunken Driving 6th and Theft of Motor Vehicles 15th . Few households (5.3%) had suffered vandalism and only in 9% of these cases was it to the family car. Nearly a fifth of respondents (18%) knew someone who had 'Caused an Accident by Reckless Driving and 19% admitted to

driving over the limit themselves. Only 36% of car break-ins were reported to police 38% thinking it 'pointless'.

On a smaller scale than the Islington Crime survey but directed specifically at car crime May and Hobbs (1992) interviewed 18 victims of car theft. They concentrated on victim satisfaction with police response but they still felt able to say that victim attitudes to offenders was moderate and supportive of motor projects. As there was no real expectation that police could do much, and victims only reported for insurance purposes, they were quite satisfied with police performance. Cars were most often stolen from pay and display car parks. None of the victims had car alarms which they conclude might prevent opportunistic theft but not vandalism and displacement. First reactions to the theft were confusion or shock. May and Hobbs say responses were gender-based but the examples given do not appear to reflect this. One woman is said to have been completely shattered whereas her husband just wondered how they were going to get the shopping home. But another woman said "To me it's a fairly harmless thing to do - I mean it doesn't emotionally upset me to have my car stolen."

Since Hobbs and May's work, the reporting of joyriding and the likening of car criminals to hyenas in advertising in Car Crime Prevention Year 1992 may have altered perceptions of the offence and of its gravity. Impact may differ between men and women but also between those for whom a car is solely a practical necessity and those for whom it forms part of their identity. As the argument of this study is for similarities between joyriders and all motorists, the greatest victim impact may be on those most similar to joyriders. Just as joyriding is more than stealing a car so for some victims it will represent more than just the loss of a car. To discover both the incidence and impact of car crime victimisation would require not only victim surveys but in depth interviewing on both the practical and symbolic significance of the car for the victim. Observations from fieldwork suggests that 'reformed' joyriders are keen on keeping their cars secure, relying on their own DIY solutions rather than commercial products.



### Sentencing of joyriders

When Gibbens (1958) studied car theft amongst Borstal Boys in 1953 and 1955 (nearly 20% had taken cars) he noted that sentences for 'taking and driving away a vehicle' varied considerably between courts, ranging from a conditional discharge in one court to six months' imprisonment at another. In 1992, 33% of all recorded offenders were cautioned for theft of a vehicle and 34% for taking without consent (Home Office, 1994b). The younger the offender the more likely a caution; 78% of car thieves aged 10-16 and 63% of those who took without consent received cautions. Of those coming before the courts 33% of all juvenile car thieves and 32% of those taking without consent were discharged, about half received a community sentence. Immediate custody in a Young Offender Institution was the fate of 8% and 7% of car thieves and 'twocers'. Nationally, in 1992 juveniles sentenced under the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act numbered 411, of whom 97 were sent to a Young Offenders Institute.

Oxfordshire Probation Service prepared a total of 1164 Pre Sentence Reports to the Courts for the twelve months October 1992 to September 1993 only 73 were for TWOC, Being Carried or the Aggravated versions of these (Proctor and Townsend, 1994).<sup>13</sup> The most common proposal was Community Service with nearly the same number suggesting either a straight probation order or a probation order with a condition to attend the local motor project.

### Other means of tackling joyriding: Situational and Social

In this section a number of alternative or additional solutions to car crime both situational and social are examined. Situational measures are examined first. The section on social crime prevention is largely taken up with describing what motor projects are and how they work.

This is not the place to discuss the typologies of crime prevention measures (see Brantingham and Faust, 1976 and Clarke and Mayhew, 1980). Here situational is taken to mean crime

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13. The numbers of those prepared on theft of vehicles is not known because the PROBIS information system used by the service only records the value of goods not type.

prevention addressed to reducing criminal opportunities often by target-hardening, removal or disguise i.e. one that is not interested in the disposition of the criminal or only assumes the criminal's limited rationality. Social crime prevention on the other hand assumes that the disposition or at least the behaviour of the criminal can be changed so that previously recognised and ongoing opportunities for crime are ignored. Clearly there is some scope for overlap, where this occurs it will be discussed.

The Home Office has placed considerable emphasis on situational crime prevention for many crimes such as: Closed Circuit Television (CCTV); Neighbourhood Watch; cashless wage transactions; anti-climb paint etc. Increased peripheral security for cars makes no assumption about why cars are stolen merely that if they are made difficult enough to steal then they won't be. Situations can be altered in more sophisticated ways. For example, where research shows that car crime is predominantly due to temporary use of cars to get home after public transport closes down then the provision of public transport would be a situational crime prevention measure.

Situational solutions to car crime have, more typically, been to improve the security of cars through improved locks, alarms, immobilisers, CCTV in Car Parks and advertising campaigns (£7.5 Million in 1992 and 1993) to encourage motorists to lock their cars. The effectiveness of all these must be in doubt given the continued prevalence of car crime.<sup>14</sup> When steering locks were made compulsory for all new cars from 1972 car theft went down for those cars but increased for older vehicles suggesting that the opportunist thief may well be deterred but also be displaced to easier targets.

Each successive measure is seen to augment the other measures rather than replace it. Thus a well-protected car may boast steering lock, door deadlocks, a unique ignition key, a bolt-on

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14. For those interested in these issues see: Southall and Ekblom (1986); Webb and Laycock (1992); Houghton (1992); Webb, Brown and Bennett (1992); Spencer (1992) and Tilley N (1993). The close grouping of the publication of these reports reflects the interest in the area during the period.



steering wheel or handbrake device and wheel-clamp by way of locking mechanisms. In addition it may have an alarm sufficiently sophisticated to differentiate an attempt to steal the vehicle from movement caused by the wind or playful children. The newer alarm systems may have reduced the amount of noise pollution caused by alarms but they still rely on public reporting or official action. Electronic engine immobilisation can be seen as a form of locking and is now increasingly fitted to new cars as standard.

Some cars are now fitted with a 'Tracker' system. This system relies on a hidden transponder being activated once the car is reported stolen, it may then be tracked by the police who have signed up to the system. If deterrence does not work detection should ensue. This system may work best for cars at risk of professional theft rather than the more transitory joyriding, where the car might be stolen and wrecked before its disappearance is noted. The expense of the system ensures that only the most expensive cars are likely to be covered. A low-tech version of this is the Vehicle Watch scheme whereby a sticker in the car (made difficult to remove) denotes that the owner has agreed to be stopped by the police if seen driving the car between a commonly agreed time - such as between midnight and six in the morning. The sticker should then deter the opportunist thief through fear of increased risk of being stopped. Different forces have differing systems and some have suggested an age-related sticker whereby owners obviously over thirty can signal agreement to their vehicle being stopped if driven by anyone under twenty five (say) working on the principle that joyriders and car thieves are young. The same logic would allow women car owners to protect their vehicles by inviting the police to stop their vehicle if driven by a man. This appears not to have been suggested yet.

Just as the perimeter security of vehicles can be increased so can the places from which cars are often stolen. CCTV surveillance of whole Town Centres and individual shops, banks and building societies has proved popular (Honest and Charman, 1992) ) despite civil liberties concerns (Liberty, 1989). The fast growth of such systems has led to suggestions that proper planning and evaluation have not been carried out (Groombridge and Murji, 1994).

CCTV appears to offer a common-sense solution to opportunist crime yet, Tilley (1993) identifies nine possible mechanisms (some contradictory) for CCTV to work in Car Parks. Where the mechanism is in tune with the prevailing context Tilley's evaluation is that CCTV can work but that the effect wanes with time. CCTV cameras more generally, roadside speed cameras and police helicopter and squad car cameras have all been able to capture evidence of car theft and subsequent bad driving which then becomes TV entertainment mirroring the way that motorsport accidents have, with TV shows and videos dedicated to them.<sup>15</sup>

Where situational crime prevention only knows there are potential offenders who may offend if something is not placed in their way; social crime prevention assumes that all sorts of characteristics of the offender are important and the offence less so. They may not always have a clear idea what to do with offenders but they are clear that the way forward is to deal with offenders and their offending behaviour. Motor projects are a good example of social crime prevention. Another potential solution is in the provision of driving lessons and car education for pre-legal driving age children. This may be held in conjunction with a motor project but one solution has been provided by a driving school through the education system. The scheme is called Ignition and combines elements of both situational and social crime prevention.

### Motor Projects

The 1970 report of the Advisory Council on the Penal System recommended the establishment of motor projects. The longest established is Ilderton which has been running for twenty years. The National Association of Motor Projects (NAMP) has about one hundred and twenty projects in membership. It was formed in 1986 to promote educational and vocational training of young people under 25 who are at risk of offending and the rehabilitation of those convicted, with a view to reducing the risk of re-offending. How each of the individual motor projects in membership does this is a matter for the project. There are car crime education groups or specifically car crime orientated offending behaviour groups in HMYOI

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15. See, for instance, BBC1's *Crime Beat* 5 June 1997.



Glen Parva and Castlington. There is a banger racing project within the walls of HMYOI Feltham.

Clark (1993), Development Officer for NAMP, defines motor projects as follows:

A motor project is any initiative which, in some way, involves young people with motor vehicles. Such involvement may be in the form of vehicle maintenance, road safety, teaching driving skills, vehicle preparation, go-karting, off-road motor cycling or banger racing.

It is almost inevitable that the majority of young people, and particularly young men, will be interested in motor vehicles. The motor vehicle, and in particular the car, plays a very important part in the lives of all of us. Cars are advertised as glamorous, exciting vehicles owned by *successful and wealthy people*. Motor racing is a prestige sport attracting huge sponsorship and a very high profile coverage in the media. The sheer volume of cars now on the road keeps us constantly aware of the major role they play in our lives. Young people are very susceptible to outside influences. It is not surprising therefore that many see being a success in terms of owning or driving fast cars.

Unfortunately there is a substantial minority of young people who know that they will never be able to afford the cars that they see advertised on TV and the hoardings. That fact does not stop them yearning for the excitement that such cars appear to offer. When other influences are also present the temptation to steal a car may become too much. Once the initial step has been taken, subsequent thefts become easier and easier, and the 'offending cycle' becomes more and more difficult to break. Motor projects can break this cycle by involving young offenders in worthwhile activities, teaching new skills, requiring them to address their offending and take responsibility for their actions. Projects also give them the opportunity to participate in activities which involve the excitement of controlled risk taking and competition. This opportunity has to be earned, however.

If young people at risk of becoming offenders can be involved similarly, the indicators are that they can be diverted from offending.

Clearly this definition allows for major differences in the solutions each project employs depending on how the problem is viewed locally and, crucially, by the availability of resources and the constraints attached to the funding. Local Authority Youth Service provision or Home Office Safer Cities funding might allow for more preventative or diversionary work. Funding associated with the Probation Service will require work with older and convicted offenders.

A popular conception of the motor project is that of the 'banger project': an Intermediate Treatment project where a 'charismatic mechanic' held sway - a place where 'boys will be boys'

both workers and volunteers. Such projects may still exist and many of those involved in all projects will admit an ongoing passion for cars. However, many projects are now addressing the wider social issues and the very real need to satisfy funders and the courts that motor projects work.

Research into joyriding and car crime (discussed in Chapter 2 and 3) emphasize that the initial reason for car theft is excitement and peer pressure - Light *et al* (1993) and Webb & Laycock (1992). However, different conclusions can be drawn from this. One school of thought holds that, because car theft is so exciting, only something equally exciting (banger racing and karting etc) can grab the interest of the (mostly) young men who do it. Opposed to this is the argument that nothing (not even sex or drugs) can match the excitement of car theft. This second school also points out the experience of Belfast where the prospect of 'knee-capping' by the paramilitaries or shooting by the security forces at road blocks fails to deter joyriding. The ongoing re-evaluation of the 'nothing works' argument of the 70s does suggest that some things do work. If motor projects are to work they will need to be clear where their intervention is best made and to monitor and evaluate accordingly. This has, until now, been a weakness of such projects. Those who work with them 'know' they work - it is self-evident. They are clearly cheaper than prison but it is still unclear whether the guiding principle of motor projects - actual or potential car thieves working with cars - is proven. All of these issues are taken up in Chapter 6.

To illustrate what motor projects do the history and main programmes of the TRAX Motor Project in Oxford are described below with occasional comparative or additional information about the Ilderton Motor Project. The description is intended only as a guide, further description and analysis is to be found in Chapter 2, where the literature is discussed and Chapter 6 on the Findings. The spectacular events recorded by the media on the Blackbird Leys Estate drew attention to the problem of car crime in Oxford but the history of TRAX (as it is usually known) goes back beyond this.<sup>16</sup> The impulse behind TRAX came from the

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16. It is not an acronym.



Probation Service responding to conversations between Chief Superintendent David Lindley and Assistant Chief Probation Officer Tim Powell about the escalating car crime problem in Oxford. Patsy Townsend, a main grade probation officer, joined the probation services Community Resource Development Team in July 1991 and, after visiting Ilderton Motor Project, Walsall Motor Project and the DRIVE Project in Telford, recommended a Motor Project for Oxford. Events on the 'Leys' provided the stimulus for action on her proposals. TRAX was launched on 31 July 1992.

At the time of the fieldwork (September 1993 - June 1994) ten respondents answered a number of questions (Groombridge, 1994). Their ages ranged from 14 to 27 so fall within the sample described by Light *et al* (1993). The mean age was 17.8. Four were at school, two unemployed, one in training and only one in work with one refusing to answer.

The Car Crime Group at TRAX was funded by the Home Office Probation Service Division under its Supervision Grant Scheme from Social Services, Education Department, local business and fund-raising. It had a modern workshop in the Isis Business Centre on an industrial estate in the shadow of Rover's Cowley works and less than a mile from the Blackbird Leys Estate. It now has more central premises and, following changes in Home Office policy, is no longer funded by central Government.

TRAX run separate preventative programmes for under and over seventeens, separate Car Crime Groups for adults and youths sentenced by the courts and the DIAL programme (Driving Instruction And Law) for probation clients who could benefit from driving instruction and sessions for local schools. The normal timetable is set out in table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2 TRAX Motor Project Timetable

	Afternoon	Evening 5-10 pm
Monday	Workshop School Session	Workshop Over 17 Team Car Crime Programme Opportunities
Tuesday		Workshop Under 17 Team
Wednesday	Workshop School Session	Workshop Car Crime Programme
Thursday		Workshop Over 17 Team Car Crime Programme Group work
Friday		Workshop Under 17 Team

Weekends might involve racing/practising for the under and over 17s, collectively known as the TRAX Teams. In their first year of operation they won the National Association of Motor Projects Banger Racing Championships.

The TRAX Teams might be seen as forming the central focus of the project for a number of reasons. First, they do the racing, which attracts the greatest public interest and often misunderstanding. Second, the team members are likely to be with the project for longer - some have now been with the project from its earliest days.

The Car Crime Programme works with known convicted offenders sentenced by the Courts. Programmes last eight weeks and are run for both those over age 17, sentenced by the adult courts, and under 17s, sentenced by the Youth Court. In the first year of operation, to September 1993, they ran five car crime programmes.

The DIAL programme involves a six week course which looks at issues around driving and the law, such as drinking and driving or the correct documentation. Learning methods include group discussions, quizzes and videos. It involves no driving but encouragement is given towards taking the test. A local driving instructor is involved who also offers discounted lessons. By June 1994 four courses had been run but TRAX were disappointed with the numbers attending. One reason may be that TRAX premises were then difficult to get to without a car.

Schools have also made use of TRAX facilities and expertise. From the opening of TRAX to June 1993 a group of boys and girls from Banbury Tutorial Unit visited weekly and worked on building Minis for racing. In September 1993 they started work with Cowley St James Special Unit but it ended shortly after when the funding from the feeder schools was not forthcoming. There are plans to contribute to 'Education Plus'<sup>17</sup> at the nearby Peers School. Peers School is not only near to TRAX but to Blackbird Leys. The school had an INSET day after the 'riots' on the Leys so the school was closed. It was decided not to discuss joyriding or the 'riot' with pupils. The police had wanted to come and "talk to the boys" about car crime. The headmaster refused but did let them visit more often (twelve times in all) to discuss the wider issues with smaller mixed tutor groups. Apparently at schools where the police did address boys en masse they were given a 'hard time' (Interview with Bernard Clark, Head of Peers School 4 March 1994).

Whilst TRAX team sessions start in the evening it is not uncommon to find some of the team there, already working on cars. Working on cars can mean stripping out a newly arrived vehicle of all dangerous or superfluous material; stripping down an engine, brakes, transmission or steering; painting cars in the TRAX colours of black with the team name and sometimes a drivers name. There may be cathartic bashing away at a reluctant panel or painstaking work on a fiddly part. Both may attract a more or less helpful audience. Sometimes others may be called over to help or to learn. Intricate feats of welding as well as 'sparktacular' displays of cutting may attract an audience. Whilst each car belongs to a team and the proposed driver is pencilled in there is always time to look at or learn from what mates, or particularly staff, can demonstrate. Depending on the numbers of members and the closeness to a race will determine the balance between starting and finishing activities.

The workshop has the 'feel' of a garage but the cleanliness of a Kwik Fit Exhaust centre rather than a 'dodgy' grease merchant where the only 'clean' thing is the naked woman on the tyre calendar. Unipart, a TRAX sponsor, produce such a calendar but the Probation Service's

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17. After hours additional non-compulsory non-National Curriculum education.



Equal Opportunities policy means it may not be displayed. There is no music. The impression of arriving at a tyre or exhaust centre is heightened by the location on an industrial estate; there are no 'bangers' in sight only the smart cars of local businesses. The disadvantage of the site is that the cars have to be stored nearly a mile away in a Rover compound.

By comparison the Ilderton Motor Project in South London is cramped up in the middle of a roundabout under a railway arch. Cars and parts are piled up everywhere - convenient but limiting. It looks 'dodgy', the music is loud but again there are no calendars and much the same activities going on. The description Broad (1982:66) gives of Ilderton could be true today down to the visit by an ITV film crew (See Chapter 6 for fieldnote descriptions). At both there are staff and members but also a group who are difficult to place easily in either category immediately. On an under 17s evening at TRAX an over 17 may be helping out. On an over 17s evening an under 17 may turn up on some pretext. At both, friends of staff or members may turn up briefly often on 'car' business, again reinforcing the garage feel.

Typically at about 7 pm - earlier if bored or cold, later if everyone is busy or nobody wants the hassle of taking the order and sorting out the money - a chip break occurs. The break may vary in length and content but is the major opportunity for talking. However, as this is usually a group of young and older men it is frequently boisterous, most smoke and swear. 'Sex and drugs and rock and roll'<sup>18</sup> are discussed but so are children's TV programmes, arcade or video games and local gossip. One evening they share with relish a story about a local solicitor known to speed in his car, there was the punning implication that he was partial to amphetamines. The relish may be related to what Sykes and Matza (1957) describe as the 'techniques of neutralisation' deployed by offenders, "it wasn't me", "I didn't harm anyone", or, in this instance, "everyone's at it". Sykes and Matza specifically mention that auto theft is passed off by offenders as 'borrowing'. Whether representing 'techniques of neutralisation' or male banter it coincides with the observations of Vass (1984 & 1990) on Community Service and would not surprise those who work with young men. Buckley and Williams (1991)

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18. The lyric is Ian Dury's but for 'rock and roll' read rave, techno or jungle music.

particularly note the difficulties of working with 'Rambo'.

After the break they go back to working on the cars until about 10 pm. In addition to the 'chat' at the chip break occasional chats and male banter puncture the application to task. Poor working practices are more likely to be pointed out than sexist or homophobic language. Working side by side means that conversations about difficult questions need not take place face to face. However, it is not unusual in the course of the evening for someone to seek out a member of staff to have a talk about a particular problem, whether legal or social.

Both the TRAX and Ilderton Motor Projects are involved in Banger Racing and therefore are in an atypical minority of motor projects (Martin and Webster 1994). Most motor projects would race in meetings specifically organised for them but both TRAX and Ilderton also race against private teams on equal terms and also at public meetings in special races. The descriptions set out below are intended to indicate not only what happens at a race meeting but also introduce further aspects of car culture.

#### Wimbledon Stadium - Sunday

A large crowd gathers more than two hours before the first race. The pits are part of the car park - the cars attract the attentions of the crowd who move freely around the pits. The crowd constitutes predominately white men from their teens to middle age. Some are accompanied by girlfriends or young families. There are to be nine races. Three sets of races for each category: Bangers; Hot Rods and Lightning Rods. Bangers are the cheapest form of the sport and Ilderton have three cars prepared to race against private teams. Many of the racers will have nothing more than survival or crashing others on their minds rather than winning. The chaos of the race makes it difficult to believe that one can plot and follow a strategy for winning.

The noise and the speed of the rods is exciting. The bangers come on third. These seem less

exciting to this spectator but is probably terrifying to the participants as thirty bangers attempt to race around a four hundred metre track. The fifteen laps leave over half the cars damaged or stalled. These are cleared from the track and the drivers and mechanics have until the next race to get the cars back into working order. Few survive a full meeting.

As the dark of evening comes the pits seem like a cinematic version of hell. Sledge hammers are wielded, some have welding equipment or cutters that send showers of sparks. Some cars catch fire and despite a 5 mph speed limit in the pits cars are driven at speed around the pits through which the crowds continue to mill. The crashed cars attract as much attention from the spectators as the glossy paint jobs of the rods. Advice is sometimes proffered and assistance given.

#### Arena Essex

This meeting is to form part of the normal Easter Monday programme of banger and stock car racing. There are to be three special races in which youths can race. Two form part of the pre-race warm ups the survivors go forward to a final in the body of the meeting. The programme explains what Motor Projects are but mentions joyriding only indirectly. The racers get their names in the programme, so are pleased. TRAX, Ilderton and the Bradford Motor Education Project (BMEP) are to race and have brought a number of mums and sisters to watch - though no dads. A BBC camera crew interviews all the motor project leaders and some of the drivers and mechanics for a programme called First Sight. They film the work on the cars and attach a camera to a car to record the racing in progress.

The races are only for IMP, BMEP and TRAX plus two individuals so don't have the look of the adult races at Wimbledon nor of the adult races in the main programme. The stadium is much more open so the noise is less; the adrenal thrill less. The crowd is mostly young men, young couples and families; again very few black people.



As motor projects are often intended as 'alternatives' to custody their presumed lack of punitiveness is often held against them. Put simply the allegation is that they are 'treats for naughty boys'. This position is explored below in respect of an allegation against TRAX in the magazine *Carweek*.

This scheme seems little short of lunacy to me. What must youngsters who obey the law think, some of whom would love to go on a high performance driving course but haven't got the money?"

"Oh yeah, that's really cool. If they nick a car now the police won't catch up with them.

These quotes, respectively from Sir Teddy Taylor MP and member of the public, are taken from an article in *Carweek* (26 January 1994). The article was headlined "JOYRIDERS PUT ON THE RIGHT TRACK BY F1 ACE WATSON" and sub-headed "Fury as we reveal how young offenders are being taught to race for free at Silverstone's driving school." The quotes and the general tone of the article all draw on the workhouse principles of 'less eligibility' inscribed in the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834.

The article quotes both Myles Daly, the TRAX Project Leader, and Committee member Chief Inspector Clarke respectively putting the other side of the case, "The kids only get into trouble because they are bored. We try to give them a new purpose in life." and, "Each joyrider has the potential to steal 200 cars a year. If we can stop one, then we've saved a lot of money for everyone. A place on TRAX is a lot cheaper than keeping someone in prison." The claims made in the article, however, are almost entirely false, particularly the main claim that "As part of the TRAX course convicted joyriders are allowed to drive Peugeot 309s around Silverstone". By way of comparison, or to incite envy, they helpfully inform readers that a full days' advanced saloon driving course costs £200. The truth is more prosaic; no convicted joyriders are allowed to drive as part of the TRAX programme for offenders but voluntary members may race bangers. John Watson has been supportive of TRAX but no TRAX members have been given the use of his Peugeot 309s. *Carweek* eventually apologised and published a correction.

## Ignition

Ignition is a modular education course for use by teachers with 15-17 year olds. It is provided by the British School of Motoring (BSM) and sponsored by Vauxhall Motors to meet Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum's requirements for Road Safety Education and cross-curricular themes such as Citizenship. It involves students working through workbooks, discussing written and video material (including one on 'Car Adverts'), off-road driving tuition and on-road risk perception training using simulators (BSM,1994). Whilst mostly aimed at Road Safety it is explicitly intended to reduce car crime - and Middlesborough Police were said to credit it with reducing car crime 30% in the area of a school that introduced, though 'offenders' are barred from taking part (The Guardian 15 November 1994).

## Drama

There are other ways of addressing car crime socially; for instance, both Theatre Adad and GW Theatre tour plays on joyriding to schools. Theatre Adad have been funded to tour schools in Safer Cities areas and worked with the Ilderton Motor Project in the development of their drama. GW Theatre work extensively with schools in Manchester in cooperation with the probation service. These address the issue of car crime by recognising the attractions of joyriding but dramatising them to gain audience interest for attention to the 'message'. Where these succeed dramatically and in tackling offending behaviour it seems likely that didacticism is to be avoided. A composite description of one such scheme is set out below. Both the content of the drama and the responses of the children can be seen as evidence of a common car culture.

Whilst the drama is scripted, the setting and audience differ for each performance. Further differences arise and multiply as the unscripted forum and workshop portion of the session unfold. The differences of the children's responses keep the actors fresh.

The drama opens with the four cast members taking a wheel chair from the back of the stage and pushing it between them, from one to the other, and daring each other to take it with much mutual baiting with the epithet “chicken”. One takes it and the others push him quickly towards the audience. They stop just short and he jumps out to declaim his joyriding creed in couplets such as “I’ll run you over in my Vauxhall Nova”.

Then unfolds the tale of Mickey (“I come from Newcastle me. Me friends call me Gazza.”) and his cousin Bazza, from Manchester, their friend Cheryl (“she’s tough”) and Tina who Mickey fancies. They are about 14. It is the summer holidays. There is nothing to do.

Hanging around behind Tesco’s one evening, bored with racing shopping trolleys, a dramatic event transforms their evening and their lives. A BMW screams into the Car Park. Its two occupants leap out, leaving the doors open and some keys in. A police car is heard but it travels on. Silence returns to the Car Park and the car appears to be beckoning them. “It is handsome.” “It is ‘wicked’.”. Only Tina rejoins “It’s stolen.”

Cheryl gets in the driving seat after a moment of hesitation and taunts Mickey to get in. She moves to the passenger seat and he gets in. Bazza is pressed too and gets in. Tina does too but continues to express misgivings about being there and the speed they travel and Mickey’s driving.

They get home late and Pauline, Mickey’s mother and Bazza’s aunt played by ‘Tina’, gives them an opportunity to explain what they have been up to. They lie to her and she knows it. They sleep badly and Mickey has a dream. He is beating Nigel Mansell and receiving the acclaim of the crowd.

The next day the boys go to the cinema (Mad Max!). They meet ‘Dave’, the driver of the stolen BMW played by Cheryl. After some teasing ‘Dave’ eventually offers to teach them all he knows about joyriding. Later that week he cannot come out with them but they feel that he has taught them well and they decide to go solo.



The car is stolen and the girls come along. The ride proves fatal. A child (Katy) crossing the road on a zebra crossing with her mother is killed. The mother's grief is witnessed and she (played by Cheryl) delivers a moving speech expressing her hatred of joyriding - the act and the expression. The speech is drawn from the real-life lament of the mother of a child victim.

In the closing scene some months later Bazza is visiting his aunt and Mickey again. Mickey is in the wheel chair. This time it is not a metaphorical car but a real wheelchair. Clearly the crash has disabled him. Bazza is sad and addressing the audience he asks "Have you ever wished you could go back in time and change just one thing?"

The actors then use a warm up/ice-breaking exercise to get the children involved. 'Simon says' is common. Seeing the actors and teachers acting 'stupid' helps the children get in a creative mood.

One actor then invites the children to remember what Bazza had said. They eventually come up with his desire to go back in time to change one thing. They are then invited to think what Bazza could have done differently. They are reminded it is only a play and therefore anything can be changed. They call out various suggestions.

The actors reprise the moment when the BMW arrives and the kids get in. The children are asked how they felt Bazza felt at the moment before he got in the car. "Confused", "worried", "scared" come the answers. But he gets in. Why? "He wanted to be cool." "He didn't want to be called 'chicken'." A girl at John Burns School says "peer pressure". A check with the cast later reveals this is the first time so knowing an answer is given but the look that passed between the child and teacher suggested to the cast that some prior work on joyriding might have primed the child.

What would the children do? Again various suggestions are made from getting in to walking away. A volunteer is sought to stand in Bazza to try out the ideas. Another child might play

Auntie Pauline or an adult who might be told. One innovative suggestion was to let down the tyres of the cars though it was also thought that this might lead the child to be hit by mates and possibly still prosecuted by the police. Both girls and boys come forward; not always to play same sex roles.

The children then split down into groups with an actor each. Sometimes the teachers move with the groups but this seems not to inhibit the children who are invited to think about cars and driving. They are also shown pictures of crashed cars that have been stolen. They are asked to think how fast they thought the cars were going when they crashed. The cars have usually crashed at a low speed but always the children estimate very high speeds.

They are then invited to make up a jingle, rap, poem or slogan aimed at discouraging joyriding. A rap is popular. The girls usually sing and provide the words whereas the boys prefer to keep in the background providing the 'beat box' effect for the backing track. Early suggestions usually mirror or even reproduce current road safety slogans such as "Kill your speed not a child" or "Don't drink and drive" but as the actors suggest possible lines or ideas the children start to develop their own work. At neither performance did a child mention the Car Crime Prevention Year hyena adverts. An example is:

Stop that you fool you're not very cool....  
this is the end of our rap  
joyriding is a death trap.

And picturing a hospital scene we find "...the joyrider was broken hearted, wished that he had never started."

Finally the company invite the children to think about the one and a half hours they have worked together and to possibly work with their teachers on the issues and perhaps presenting their more polished work to assembly. The company have received letters and examples of work from schools. These are examined below.

On Friday 21 May 1993 I revisited John Burns School to meet the two classes of 10 -11 years and their teachers. The children were asked a number of questions and teachers joined in to stimulate discussion, or restrain it at times. The children clearly remembered the performance and its message; one boy reciting the whole plot.

With forty children shouting out it wasn't always easy to gain individual impressions but it did give a good picture of some of the group dynamics. Under cover of the general hubbub some boys took the opportunity to shout out 'naughty' or 'silly' answers and throughout about half a dozen boys were the most vocal. A number of girls did make individual contributions but they needed some coaxing.

The central issue of peer pressure was identified as one of the play's messages. This chimed in with the work of the Parachute Company's puppet drama on bullying which they had also seen. This explained why one of the children had used the expression "peer pressure" during the forum. As they were reminded of how the actors had called each other "chicken" nods of assent from the children suggested a practical knowledge of how peer pressure worked.

Many of the boys and some of the girls had clear ideas about the sorts of cars they wanted and why. All said they expected to become drivers and even though they knew many adults who drove badly they would drive well. Asked to describe what good driving was one girl ventured "slow" but was immediately shouted down. Four boys thought they might drive "a little badly" Examples they and the class gave of "driving a little badly" were: red light jumping; cutting up; speeding and seat belt offences. Many felt that the legal driving age limit should be lower. The lowest 'sensible' answer was "when you can reach the pedals". Some claimed to have driven cars but none to be joyriders therefore their parents or relatives must have connived at it.

On joyriding specifically the kids seemed clear that it was bad but many felt that nothing could be done about it as "money", being "hooked" or the attractions of the "adrenalin rush" could



not easily be overcome. Few thought the play itself would work. It was entertaining and the workshops enjoyed. Indeed they wanted it to be longer and possibly to do a play about joyriding themselves. Only severe sentences or some traumatic incident in the course of joyriding were thought likely to be effective.

The view of teachers was gained informally during the various visits and from letters to the company. Teachers wrote from: St Anselm's; Allfarthing (2); The Wandle and Southmead. There were also letters from teachers in schools in Lewisham. All mention the quality of the performance, the enjoyment and the thought provoked in the children.

For example: "It helped the children understand a very difficult topic, which they otherwise might have tackled in a rather flippant way." and "They certainly won't forget the message that was put across so well." Commenting on the difficulty of the audience and the power of the drama one teacher said: "Our children are not an easy audience and quickly "see through" things. They were totally involved and some were near to tears at times!"

Similar comments were made by teachers at the time of the performance and on the evaluation visit about the children's enjoyment of the drama, attention to its message and the creative and thought provoking work flowing from it.

Whatever the effectiveness of the play in crime prevention terms it clearly inspired creative work. A tour of the school revealed that the next two classes, that had not done - but merely witnessed - the workshops, had incorporated some poems on joyriding into a transport project. An analysis of the work of children sent to the company is set out below. All quotes use original spelling and punctuation.

Fifty eight letters of appreciation to Theatre Adad have been examined. They are mostly in the nature of a thank you for a good performance. A number do refer directly to the content of the play and workshop like 'Duncan' from Allfarthing School who is worth quoting at length:

If you crash, not only are you, likely to hurt yourself. You are likely, to hurt and kill others. This will effect the families involved, the community and yourself if you kill somebody. Because the thought will stay with you for the rest of your life. If you steal a car, then the owner will be affected, because the car will probably be wrecked. If you get injured you will take up beds in hospital for no reason. You would also affect the police, fire and ambulance services, because they will need to give assistance.

If your friends wanted to joyride and you didn't want to, your friends would probably pressure you to get in the car and if you don't you might be called a chicken. You might get in the car, to look big in front of your friends and if they don't they would be left out. If you were joyriding on the motorway and you broke down, then you might cause blockages.

This example shows a strong sense of the various consequences that can flow from joyriding for the young person, the victim and the wider community.

'Tessa', from Allfarthing, says, "I enjoyed the play as it proved to us joyriding is dangerous. I hope seeing this and acting out ourselves joyriding will stop." There are many letters like Tessa's and Duncan's they tend to show the clear influence of the play and, possibly, of teachers promptings. Some of the letters are decorated.

Greater creativity can be seen in the raps and poems though these too are marked by the promptings of the play and class homogeneity. Thirty six additional letters of poems and raps have been examined. As five of the poems were repeated by several from a class a total of only nineteen poems were examined.

A pair of poems contrasted the view of the joyrider with that of the family; whether of the victim or offender is not made clear.

I never thought this would happen to me.  
But it did it ruined my family.  
All our lives have gone to pieces.  
And the pain never ceases.  
Now I am at the end of my sad tale.  
I tell you now joyriding will always fail.

We broke into a car  
 It was fine so far.  
 We had had a drink.  
 But we didn't think.  
 100 mph down the motorway.  
 I was thinking yeah hea hea!  
 Breaks were squealing, wheels going wild  
 We hit the lamppost as well as a child.

## Conclusion

This chapter has briefly reviewed the concept of car culture, the history of joyriding, its legal position, possible definitions of joyriding, the current reality of joyriding and how the criminal justice system sentences joyriders. Finally, other means of tackling joyriding whether situational or social are introduced, particularly Motor Projects. All of these issues will be returned to in later chapters, particularly the overwhelming maleness of both the 'problem' and the 'solutions'. In the following chapter the literature that accepts a more narrow criminal justice/common-sense definition of joyriding is reviewed as is that on motor projects and on masculinities. In Chapter 3 the deficiencies of this narrow approach are more clearly set out.



## CHAPTER 2 CURRENT KNOWLEDGE AND FINDINGS ABOUT JOYRIDING, MOTOR PROJECTS AND MASCULINITIES

In this chapter the small but growing literature on joyriding and on projects designed to deal with joyriding is set out and evaluated. Reference will be made to studies in the US but the main aim is to examine critically the British literature as the 'specificity' of British car culture means that findings from other cultures cannot necessarily reliably inform discussion.<sup>1</sup> For simplicity, it is intended to examine these in a broadly chronological way. As the literature on joyriding is so sparse some of the literature on juvenile crime that touches on joyriding is also examined. Throughout, attention is paid to the normative assumptions about cars, crime and masculinity that inform many of these texts. For this reason theories of crime and masculinity are also introduced before drawing some conclusions. The material on joyriding that exists is discussed at length because of its paucity but the amount of material that this generates means that the literature is discussed rather compartmentally in this chapter. In the next chapter themes are drawn out and literature grouped more thematically.

The overwhelming theme of the literature on car crime is a concern with situational measures. This is particularly true of the research carried out for the Home Office but also informs the work of others. Much of this work uses market research type questions to advise policy makers on situational measures. It is not intended to review this literature except where it illustrates a point.

As might be expected from the centre of criminology and the car industry, most of the early studies of joyriding, autotheft or car crime were carried out in the United States of America. A common theme of much of this work is a concern with the 'class' differences between joyriders and other delinquents. Wattenberg and Balistreri (1952) writing about their 1948 study, noted that the 230 white youths charged with Auto Theft that they studied in Detroit

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1. Differences in traffic density and road layout - for instance, roundabouts are very rare in USA - and the age for legal driving.

differed from the 2,544 youths charged with other types of offence in that they came from relatively favoured neighbourhoods. This finding was echoed by Gibbens (1958) in Britain but his own version of the 'favoured group' relied on psycho-analytical evaluations. The 'favoured group' theory has been influential in America where Cavan and Ferdinand (1975) found that teenage car thieves fell into a distinctive pattern, generally better adjusted in school, in their families, and with their peers than other types of delinquents. They also noted they are likely to be white, and to come from a higher economic stratum than other delinquents. Similarly Sanders (1976) held that automobile theft is generally committed by white middle class youths in groups of two, or more, largely for kicks. In the same vein Gibbons found:

Juvenile joyriders are usually from middle class, comfortable economic backgrounds. They live in single-family dwellings in middle income areas. Their parents are usually white-collar or other types of workers. (1977:310)

Whilst McCaghy *et al* (1977) specifically set out to question the 'favoured group' theories of the writers mentioned above they share some continuities, implicit and explicit. Explicit is a concern with the social status of car thieves. Also explicit in many of the American studies is the race element. What remains implicit is the meaning of racial differences. For the 'favoured group' theorists - and for McCaghy *et al* - being black in America is to have a non-favoured group status.

McCaghy *et al* review the work of Wattenberg and Balistreri, Cavan and Ferdinand, Sanders, Gibbons and Gibbens. They note the economic and cultural (i.e. bad) influence of the car, quoting from the Lynd's (1929) *Middletown* judge for whom the car is "...a house of prostitution on wheels."<sup>2</sup> Wattenberg and Balistreri had found 88% of those arrested were white and came from "above average" neighbourhoods. However, McCaghy *et al* found that of 103 arrests in Toledo they studied in 1975/6 55.9% were white and 42.2% black but the population was only 13.8% black. Moreover, whilst the median income level for the area was \$10,500 50% of arrested auto thieves came from areas with income levels less than \$8,000.

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2. The Lynd's (1929) mention car theft in Muncie, Indiana amongst other things: 154 cars were stolen in 1923.

43% of cars were recovered in areas with more than 25% black residents. Furthermore in their study records of 14,815 juveniles before the courts of Virginia 1966 to mid 1973 1,239 juveniles were charged with auto theft 46.2% were black and 53.7% white against 13,184 with no auto offences 48.6% black and 51.3% white. These findings lead them to reject the 'favoured group' hypothesis.

In their work they propose a fivefold typology of auto theft: joyriding; short-term transportation; long-term transportation; profit and commission of other crime. They apply this to the Toledo data giving different ages for each classification. Using quotes from earlier work they establish that joyriding is stealing cars "to have a good time" (Schepses, 1961), "striving for status and recognition" (Short and Strodbeck, 1965), "to prove his masculinity" (Gibbens 1958) or to deal with 'oral deprivation' (Noshpitz, 1975). None of this seems surprising given the significance of the car in America, dating customs and popular cinematic representations of the car and adolescent sexuality. The category of joyriding then is: "essentially recreational, non-utilitarian, short-term use of cars", "The car is stolen not for what it does, but for what it *means*" (McCaghy *et al* 1977:378 emphasis added) Fifteen was the average age for joyriding. It was also found that joyriders stole older cars and relied more on the carelessness of drivers than breaking in. They offended in company

McCaghy *et al* had little information on auto-theft as short-term transportation but their police informants suggested that the numbers involved were probably similar to joyriding. The average age for short-term transportation use was 17.4. Like joyriding, short-term use relied on opportunity but they often acted alone and usually did not steal from the car.

Theft for long-term transportation involves the car being retained for personal use. This is unlikely for young people as they would be unable to explain how they came by a car. The average age for this was 23.2. Theft of cars for profit ie the sale of parts or the whole car (retail or wholesale) had the oldest average age at 31.5. Cars were also stolen in connection with other crimes such as getaway, sexual assault, transport of stolen or illegal goods.



It is clear that there may be some overlap in these categories in theory and in practice. The original intention of auto-thieves may have been just to get home (short term transportation) but picking friends up on the way might have lead to some showing off in the car (joyriding). The quality of the stereo might make its theft obvious (profit) and the unexpected availability of a garage might mean the car is kept longer (long-term transportation). It is also clear that fitting known offenders into the scheme is difficult without asking them (or examining full arrest or probation records) as the legal definitions differ markedly from this or any other criminological one.

Some time has been spent on McGaghy *et al* because it sums up much of the early American literature, takes issue with the, then, prevailing hypothesis of middle class or favoured status for car thieves and introduces many of the themes to be found in the British Literature.

Most of the British literature falls into the 'modern era' except Gibbens (1958), mentioned briefly above. There is a growing literature on the particular problems faced in Belfast, N. Ireland. Light *et al* (1993) take the view that "the particular political situation obtaining in W Belfast makes cross-over comparisons difficult" but that "much of the Extern data coincides with that produced by mainland research" (Light *et al* 1993:5).<sup>3</sup> This may be so but the Belfast studies are left out of the summaries below for ease of handling the amount of material. They will be examined in discussion of the research problem. It should also be noted that Light *et al* found differences approaching statistical significance for the North East which might put Brigg's (1991) work (Newcastle) and Spencer's (1992) work (Sunderland) in a different light. These differences might be taken to show differences between the car culture of Britain and Northern Ireland, and even within Britain.

It is important to look at Gibbens' (1958) work as it appears to be the earliest British study. It can be placed in the 'favoured status' group of studies that were superseded by the modern

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3. The Extern Organisation is a voluntary and charitable organisation based in Northern Ireland concerned with the prevention of crime and the development of community initiatives.

era but its undercurrent of Freudian psycho-sexual explanations for car crime reconnect it with a more contemporary concern for other discourses, such as gender.

Like the various Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police quoted in Chapter 1, Gibbens could be speaking today:

The theft of cars, and especially 'taking and driving away without the owner's consent' for the sake of joy-riding, is a crime of the times and perhaps destined to be one of the most important forms of nuisance. (Gibbens 1958:257)

In London at that time 2,474 vehicles were stolen, 1919 recovered and 5,805 taken without consent. The total for England and Wales was 4,414 thefts. He notes though that in 1954 Stockholm had 741.9 'takings' of motor vehicles per 100,000 against London's 85.4 though both had similar vehicle densities. Again this suggests differences between car cultures but he offers no explanation. Gibbens was more concerned with observable clinical differences between those that took cars and those that did not. In 1953 and 1955 every other 'lad' sentenced to Borstal training from the London area was interviewed, tested and visited at home by a psychiatric social worker. One hundred were seen in each year. In 1953 14% had car convictions but by 1955 25% had. No explanation is attempted for the rise but Briggs (1991) conjectures, and the MPD Commissioner appears to agree that increasing car density might be responsible.

The 39 car thieves were seen to be distinctive in personality and social background. They were more neurotic but no less delinquent.<sup>4</sup> They came from intact homes, were later members of large families and came to Borstal after previous convictions for which they had received probation, possibly because they came from 'good' homes. He found it "uncommon for severely deprived youths to commit this offence because they tend to establish a pattern of stealing money etc, before puberty gives them the urge to joy-ride." (Gibbens, 1958:261) This is the nearest he comes to considerations of class.

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4. However, their Mannheim and Wilkins prediction scores at 25.76 were not significantly different to the remainder's 26.51.

Like many others Gibbens attempts a classification; thus of the thirty nine borstal boys he studied: twenty were 'joy-riders'; six were 'joyrider/thieves'; three took cars to abscond and three apparently wanted to learn to drive. In general he concludes that boys from 'good' homes need to prove to their mothers that they are 'bad'. He cites, with approval, Cohen (1955) and his contention that car-stealing is middle-class and related to a revolt against the mother - the giver of discipline in middle-class families. However, Gibbens revisited his study 25 years later and noted that "this quasi-legitimate form of protest against an over-protective mother [...] probably applies more rarely today" (1984: 57)

The late '80s and early '90s were marked by a resurgence of interest in car crime, due to actual increases in car crime but also the increased prominence given to car crime. The substantial contributions of Briggs (1991), Webb and Laycock (1992) Light *et al* (1993) and Spencer (1993) all date from the early 90s as do a growing number of smaller studies, such as Gow and Peggrem (1991), Davies (1993) and Cooper (1989). There are also dissenting voices such as Jefferson (1992) and Jackson (1992).

Briggs aimed to look at joyriding from 'the perspective of the joyriders' and to evaluate the use of motor projects but he does not disguise his concern over their driving and, in presentations of his work his own obsession with cars. His thoughts on joyriding are discussed here; those on motor projects are discussed later. He makes a distinction between 'joyriding' where middle and upper class adolescents may 'borrow' their parents or friends cars, or even use their own, and 'twocking' a working class phenomenon where cars are stolen or 'twocked'. However, throughout his work he uses 'joyriding' and 'twocking' synonymously.

Working in Newcastle Upon Tyne as a social worker Briggs studied 200 males under 17 with a TWOC history. He mainly asks 'market research' questions - how, why, where, when and who with - that might be used to prevent or deter crime. So we discover the majority (117) used a scaffold bar as the means of entry. They gave 'for excitement' and 'to impress my friends' as the most common reasons for taking cars. Seventy nine percent had planned to steal a car but



63% said they were more interested in the car stereo than the car. Eighty three percent reckoned curbside was easiest place to take cars or goods in cars from and 75% said car parks. Eighty three percent claimed that a car alarm would deter them. They started young: 8.5% started aged 8-12; 28% started at 13; 30% at 14 and 23.5% at 15.

He adapts the typology in McGaghy *et al* (1977) by adding theft from and using the term 'twocking' instead of joyriding or theft. He concludes,

Motor cars are an omnipresent, inescapable feature of contemporary life...they are attractive, available and furthermore, present little problem for the experienced joyrider to obtain and for whom the chances of detection are extremely low" (Briggs 1991:49).

The question then should be why aren't more cars stolen? Similarly the background and antecedents of his sample appear little different from those who chose not commit crime or different crimes.

Webb and Laycock (1992) are mostly concerned with situational measures such as greater perimeter security for cars, the dispersal of the parts of the stereo about the car, immobilising devices and better surveillance of garaging and car parking. They make the intriguing suggestion that in London traffic congestion deters the thief with pleasure rather than profit in mind and that an increased proportion of cars are stolen rather than taken without consent.

Spencer's (1992) work on the Pennywell Estate in Sunderland is particularly interesting as it does not just rely on research solely with known car thieves. The self-report survey of 86 schoolboys showed 24% had been present at a theft of a motor vehicle and 14% admitted theft of. Money was said by respondents to be the major reason for car theft, 80% against 19% for 'excitement' or to 'impress friends' (18%). Interviews at a local youth club with nine 10-15 year olds confirmed these results but revealed fewer willing to admit offending. She concludes that autocrime is, as Downes (1966) identified, a collective 'solution' for the boredom felt by young men.

Spencer is agnostic on whether joyriding leads to other crime and pessimistic about the extent to which diversion from or immersion in the criminal justice system appeared to deter them. This leads to uncontroversial suggestions for: target hardening; increased surveillance; improved leisure facilities; Duke of Edinburgh type schemes; motor projects; and targeting the young. Eight of her respondents suggested providing cars as the answer to car crime. Two suggested blowing up the Estate. A survey showed 69% of the Estate had no access to motor transport.

Light *et al* (1993) aimed to look at car crime 'careers'; to assess offenders perceptions of sanctions and to examine some situational factors. Many had extensive criminal careers, often without coming to the notice of the police. Many were involved in other crime including other car crimes such as ramraiding, which has much of the thrill of joyriding and a potentially profitable payoff. Initial involvement is acting as look-outs but soon the move is made to driving themselves for the thrill of it. Many quickly realize the potential of stealing from cars. Some also move on to professional theft.

A half considered themselves to be 'specialists'. They had a passion for cars, started taking cars earlier, continued longer and concentrated on car crime. On the other hand 35% had been involved in burglary, 20% ramraiding and 11% 'other thefts'. 60% were currently desisting - a third of them for more than six months - from car crime citing increased maturity not the threat of custodial sentences as the reason. The Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act seemed more likely to have its effect by changing perceptions of the seriousness of joyriding rather than it deterring by the possible penalties. Accidents were no deterrent either.

A distinction is made between joyriding and performance driving - 'hotting' to the media, 'frisking' in the North East - noting that performance driving was more an activity of the young not the 'specialist'. Some, particularly those who saw themselves as professionals criticised joyriders as "making it harder for people like me who make a living out of it". Specialists were no more likely to become professionals.

There is a growing number of smaller studies but these are consonant with the larger studies. Gow and Peggrem (1991) looked at a Barnardos project in Wales whereas Cooper's (1989) concern was with managing juvenile crime, including car theft. Cooper (1989) in a self-report study of juvenile crime in Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and Essex during 1985-87 found in Manchester that many adolescents had already become involved in burglary at 11-12 years old before becoming involved later in car theft. This appears to contradict the idea of specialism mentioned by other researchers. Cooper (1989) recommends a 'Car Crime Education Group' formed by a casualty nurse, police sergeant and a driving instructor. Overcoming the advertised virtues of cars is recognised to be difficult but a campaign is proposed:

The pervading message in all publicity should be that stealing cars is unfashionable, *unmanly* and unacceptable in their community, particularly to peers." (1989:31 emphasis added)

Gow and Peggrem located young people in Gwent and W and S Glamorgan already on, or recently at, juvenile justice programmes for car theft. Fifty were administered a questionnaire which showed that cars were stolen from car parks between midnight and 6:00 am, mostly on impulse. 'Hot' Escorts, Fiestas and Astras are favoured. Performance of car and ease of theft were criteria used to select the car. They check for alarms but only half are deterred. They break a window or force a door. They learn techniques from friends but about a quarter learnt in custody or care. Asked how they started the car 62% said 'scaffing'.<sup>5</sup> They steal them for joyriding (70%) but 80% stole valuables or the radio/cassette player from cars they stole or rode in, mostly for resale. Only 34% thought of death and injury as possible consequences of their actions and only 20% thought of the victim. Two thirds had been involved in an accident.

A study of women motor offenders showed West Midlands Probation Service had 95 on their books in 1991 (Davies 1993). Race was not always recorded but where it was 4 were black (4.2%). Thirteen percent of male motor offenders were recorded as black. In total 14 (15%) of the women had been convicted of Taking and Driving Away. This was very similar to the

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5. Actually a way of getting in and breaking the steering lock rather than starting the car.



proportion of male offenders (16%). This equality may be the result of taking motor offending as the denominator rather than all recorded offending.

Jackson seeks to "move beneath the official voices mouthing 'Death riders!', 'Young hooligans!', 'evil and wicked people' to investigate the root causes." (1992:18) Jefferson defies:

any (car driving) man reading this to deny he has never got a 'buzz' out of his high-speed driving, undertaking tricky driving manoeuvres involving a high degree of hand-eye co-ordination, overtaking etc (1992:11).

Jackson seeks to try and make sense of joyriding in terms of identity politics and a gendered perspective on men and masculinities and Jefferson finally questions "is criminology 'man' enough to face up to these difficulties?" (1992:12). It is an aim of this thesis to face those difficulties.

Jackson makes a broad sweep of theories associating the 'feminisation' of working class labour and, perhaps idealistically, seeing joyriding as young men seizing symbols of power and authority concluding in an updated version of Gibbens' 'mummy's boy' hypothesis:

In order to become masculine, boys have to wrench themselves away from the merging closeness of the early mother/son contact so that they can build a gender identity as a boy/man." (Jackson 1992:38)

Despite Gibbens' (1958) contention that joyriding was destined to become a most 'important nuisance' studies of it remain rare, though 'classic' studies of juvenile delinquency do mention taking and driving away *en passant*. No consideration is given to joyriding in its own right. It is seen as indexical of delinquency. It is not possible, nor appropriate here, to summarize all the literature on juvenile crime but some classics of the literature are examined in respect of the light they can throw on joyriding. Additionally other related literature on adolescence is set out to the extent that it may offer clues about joyriding.

Two classics of the literature are Cohen's (1955) *Delinquent Boys* and Cloward and Ohlin's

(1961) *Delinquency and Opportunity* but both are based upon the specific problems of the United States; for a UK treatment of the same issue Downes' (1966) *The Delinquent Solution* still retains its place as the classic. Finally Parkers' (1974a) *View From the Boys* covers some of the same ground but from an appreciative stance.

The only specific comment that Cohen makes about 'automobile theft' is in a section on middle-class delinquency that Gibbens (1958) expands upon. He accepts the conclusion of Wattenberg and Balistrieri (1952) that it is a 'favoured-group' activity, which unusually involved auto-thieves in gang-like activity. On this basis Cohen concludes, "automobile theft was part of a well established subculture" (1955:161).

Cloward and Ohlin, like Cohen, concentrate on working class delinquency but make it clear - but only in a footnote:

We do not wish to suggest that delinquent subcultures never arise in the middle class. Evidence is accumulating that they do exist but that they are organised principally for relatively petty delinquencies such as the illicit consumption of alcohol or marijuana, sexual experiences, petty larceny and auto-theft for joy-riding (1961:12)

Their typology of delinquent gangs as: criminal; conflict or retreatist might be seen to be typified by acquisitive crime, violence and drugs. The aim of a criminal sub-culture may be to conspicuously consume, " 'big cars', flashy clothes' and 'swell dames' " (1961:96) so auto-theft for profit or for personal use could be incorporated within their scheme but not joyriding.

Thereafter there is no discussion of auto-theft or joyriding - middle-class or otherwise - but it does arise in the quotes they use to discuss the work of other theorists. Interestingly not all relate auto-theft to middle-class delinquency and often assign it to more serious crime, for example: "...middle-class adolescents, singly or in groups, participate in a variety of delinquent episodes, including such illegal activities as auto theft, operating a motor vehicle without a license" (Bloch and Niederhoffer, 1958:17); " The older guys did big jobs like stick ups, burglary and stealing autos" (Shaw, 1930:54) and "The customary set of activities of the

adolescent street-corner group includes activities which are in violation of laws and ordinances of the legal code. Most of these center around assault and theft of various types (the gang fight; auto theft..)" (Miller, 1958:17). The reasons for these disparities may, of course, derive from differences in the perceived seriousness of auto-theft. Ideological and material aspects of class may also be apparent - middle-class auto-theft played down by parents and law enforcers as merely joyriding.

Downes (1966) specifically set himself the task of critically examining the work of Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin, amongst others, and testing their concepts against English data. He found little or no evidence for delinquent sub-cultures. Joyriding and auto-theft are incidental to his concerns but do appear in discussions of the work of Matza and Sykes, for instance Downes notes "(b) denial of injury...eg vandalism for 'fun'; auto-theft for 'joy-rides'..."(1966:76) and describes the 'manufacture' of excitement which is "The distinctive content of such behaviour as 'joy-riding', 'doing a ton'.." (1966:82-83).<sup>6</sup> He also notes Spergel's (1961) division of criminal sub-cultures into 'theft' and 'racket' with car theft, particularly for joyriding, much more prominent in 'theft' areas.

Downes own empirical study compared Stepney and Poplar in 1960. Car crime rates were fairly evenly spread between and within the boroughs except larceny from vehicles was higher in Stepney. There were concentrations of taking and driving away around obvious sites such as Mile End Odeon and the London Hospital (1966:141-146). For 8-12 year olds taking and driving away was quite rare at 1.74% of offences but for 13-16 year olds it had become the first-rank offence with 29.55% and remained the first ranked offence for 17-21 years olds, at 18.55%, by 22-25 it had lapsed to eleventh rank with larceny simple, violence against the person and even illegal gambling ranked first,second and third. No female offenders were noted for this crime. Downes comments, "it is obvious that take-and-drive-away is an offence peculiar to the teenage male group in both boroughs" (1966:163). He also

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6. There is no doubting the biological and psychological basis for the attraction of speed but the attention given to 'doing a ton' is socially constructed. The metric equivalent would be 161 kph. What speed to European motorists aspire to, 100 kph or 200 kph (124 mph)?



notes differences between the boroughs and within the different car crime categories but only uses this and other information to develop a three-stage chronology of delinquency in which taking and driving away is but one indicator of the stage that has been reached. Taking and driving away characterises the second stage and car theft the third.

He also found that 28.5% of multiple offenders committed, amongst other things, taking and driving away, second only to breaking in at 53.3% and concludes that, "It must not be assumed too readily that the break-in offender and the take-and-drive offender are two different species, when in a fifth of the latter cases they are same offender"(1966:177). His data on accomplices is based on very small numbers (6) but shows fewer (1.23) than break ins (2.155), noting that it is only possible to get a certain number in a car (1966:179-180).

Downes also supplemented his statistical work with informal observation:

'Pete told me Bill and the boys were out "joy-riding" and the police would probably be in after them tonight.' He dangled a car-key and said it was Ford Consul, brand-new. 'The bloke just left it lying around (at work). Well that's just asking for it, ain't it'. They had been joy-riding 'only just lately. They just got the craze. We do it for enjoyment, you know. There's nothing else to do round here. [...]' They had this particular craze for only three days, then stopped.

Moving on a few years to 1974 and getting away from Gibben's psycho-analytic and Downes' statistic-rich consideration of sub-cultural theory Parker (1974a & 1974b) opts for participant observation which does not emphasize joyriding but makes some telling points about it nonetheless. Like Downes he is interested in Miller's description of the focal concerns of young men (trouble, toughness, smartness, excitement, fate and autonomy). 'The Boys' with whom he is hanging out, whose 'view' he seeks to give go through a period of stealing car radios.

Parker must have been in Liverpool at just the moment when joy-riding was being discovered by a new generation. The Boys are at the time aged 16-18 and are only involved in stealing car radios but the 'Tiddlers' aged 12 are already taking cars, apparently inspired by a TV

documentary about joyriding in the neighbouring estate of 'Everomer'. The Boys hold conventional views of this activity "The way they drive 'dannies' (cars) around like that they'll kill someone." (p35) In the area Parker (1974a) was examining he found only 3% car ownership. Parker concludes (Parker 1974b) "While joyriding is a delinquent action, it is motivated by respectable and conventional desires." Car use continues to be respectable and conventional but its taken-for-granted nature is now being contested.

### The literature specifically on motor projects

As can be seen from Chapter 1, the National Association of Motor Projects employs a very broad definition of motor project. The Driver Retraining Scheme described by Harraway (1986) which persuaded the local Magistrates' Court not to disqualify or make attendance a condition of a probation order if the young men prosecuted for TDA paid for and took their driving test might qualify as a motor project. Similarly the 'Car Crime Education Group' described by Cooper (1989) could also be called a motor project. However, the archetype of the motor project is the 'banger' project. It is this sort of project Jackson has in mind when he says "Go-kart racing schemes or police invitations to young men to handle fast performance cars in controlled situations are like inviting alcoholics to a brewery." (Jackson 1992:37) Since Jackson concludes that the need is to work on young men's damaging and narrow models of being masculine it is to be presumed he does not favour custody but work on that masculinity without resort to cars. His demand for abstinence sounds reactionary and ignores the growth of 'harm minimisation' methods in many areas of community sentences, 'alternatives' and community safety schemes.

A key difference between motor projects is the extent to which they might subscribe to statements such as: car thieves need to be provided with a "comparable degree of excitement and interest" (Light *et al* 1993:ix) and that programmes to divert joyriders must provide an equal, if not higher, level of stimulation, status, recognition and prestige (Briggs, 1991). As will be seen in the discussion below of motor project evaluations many projects do

not subscribe to these views of how to work with joyriders.

Even projects which appear to be straightforward banger projects are now much more likely to address offending behaviour and even examine issues around masculinity than their 'banger' heritage or orientation might suggest. Ilderton Motor Project, the longest running motor project, is a classic banger project but was also had a hand in the establishment of Theatre Adad's 'Vicious Wheels' crime prevention drama about joyriding addressed to 10 and 11 year olds described in Chapter 1.

Many projects might now agree with Tarling, in his introduction to Light *et al* (1993), that

understanding and appreciation of legal sanctions as deterrents suggests that challenging non-custodial programmes may be more appropriate for those apprehended than either cautioning or custody.

Or the Home Office Working Group (1988:20):

We feel that the development of many of the motor projects which cater for offenders referred from the courts as a condition of a probation order has in part reflected the concern and desire of the courts to have sentencing disposals which are not just an alternative to custody, but which also seek to engage actively with offenders and attempt to channel their misdirected energies from illegal motoring activities.

One respondent to Groombridge (1994) suggested that motor projects may work symbolically. Whether motor projects, however defined, work is more difficult. Webb and Laycock (1992) take the view that as 'lack of legitimate driving opportunities' is given by few as a reason for joyriding motor projects may not work. But the best motor projects would seek to work on the peer pressure and excitement reasons for joyriding. Also contrary to the expectations of the supporters of motor projects, Gibbens noted that of his joyriders "few... took up work in a garage" and that motor mechanics courses in Swedish borstals were poorly attended. However, four out of ten respondents at TRAX wanted to be mechanics (Groombridge 1994). It is clear from Light *et al* (1993) that motor projects are more likely to work with 'specialists' and McCorry and Morrissey (1989) see motor projects as more



appropriate to those who stole for expressive reasons rather than instrumental reasons which suggests intervention early in the car crime career.

It is neither clear whether motor projects 'work' nor what is to count as working. Given that some of the respondents of Light *et al* (1993) claimed to have stolen over 500 cars and that the average number each of their respondents had stolen was 70 cars each just one less car would be a considerable improvement. Driving more safely whilst continuing to offend might also be worth considering as a laudable road safety outcome.

Extern's Belfast Motor Project was found by Chamberlain (1985) to have "a high degree of success in preventing or reducing the involvement of those young people in such activities" and periodically good results are claimed for other projects. Briggs (1991) supports motor projects but gives no evidence of their success. Sheldon found - citing Stafford (1983) - that the 'Birmingham Wheels Project' had successfully addressed how to find something for energetic youngsters to do that was not anti-social. "The answer was by thinking about what would be as exciting as stealing other people's cars and racing them." (1994:223) Discussing the poor quality of many evaluation studies he uses a car metaphor, saying, " 'Motivation, or the apparent lack of it, is not a condition or capacity that can be dipped and measured like engine oil." (1994:223).

The work of Martin and Webster (1994) is the most comprehensive account of motor projects to date it is limited by the terms of its reference - probation projects - and diluted by the breadth of projects examined - from banger projects to car offending groups. As the author's acknowledge many motor projects are not run by or with the probation service to deal with convicted offenders but by voluntary organisations, social services or youth services as crime prevention or work with youth 'at risk'. The narrow focus on probation projects arose from the demands of the Home Office Division that commissioned the work.<sup>7</sup> The breadth of projects

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7. As a member of the Probation Service Division at the time I attended the commissioning meeting with Professor Martin.

examined comes from the broad definition that the National Association of Motor Projects (NAMP) employs. It is therefore ironic that of the 60 projects identified by Martin and Webster at the end of 1992 only twenty were listed as members of NAMP in February 1994 when NAMP claimed 95 members. They also precluded consideration of projects even if probation was involved where the purpose was preventative or the project only temporary.

After a telephone census a number of projects were selected for case studies that represented some of the variety of projects revealed in the census. Criteria included: whether the projects raced or not; whether they challenged offending behaviour; whether they provided training towards legal driving, whether they had a 'shared' management structure and the size of group and throughput. These criteria and Home Office pressure towards those projects in receipt of Home Office grants produced a list of eight projects: Bordesley - 'On the Right Road'; Bradford Motor Education Project - 'Crime Challenge Programme'; Ilderton Motor Project; Newcastle Motor Project; Oxford TRAX; Salford GEARS; South Glamorgan Driver Retraining Project and; Telford DRIVE.

Each of these was visited and an attempt made to gauge the extent to which the projects performed against the following criteria: the cost of disposal; diversion from custody; the satisfaction of sentencers; the satisfaction of victims/public; attendance at the project; completion of probation order; reconviction at two years and; what they call 'moral improvement'. The census resulted in a number of quantitative and qualitative findings which are set out below with a discussion of the issues that they felt the case studies revealed. Their discussion of the case studies is necessarily more tentative as factual evidence of some aspects was missing, incompatible between projects or still awaited (a Home Office reconviction study underway). The discussion below not only draws on the work of Martin and Webster but on fieldwork.<sup>8</sup>

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8. I have visited four of the same projects in the course of fieldwork and have documentary knowledge of two others. Whilst not deliberate it is no coincidence as the same considerations plus ease of access lead the author separately to these projects. This offers some cross validation for the choice of projects for fieldwork. Only the work of South Glamorgan Driver Retraining Project and Newcastle Motor Project are not known to me.

The main points arising from the census were the variety of projects, their growth but frequent demise (only 14 were older than five years), the divide between those who race (15) and those who don't (45), their concentration in a number of areas (no projects in 23 probation areas), the difficulties caused to reforming joyriders by disqualifications and insurance costs, the stimulating challenge provided by working with joyriders and the extent of inter-agency co-operation with the police.

The apparent minority position of racing projects is probably an artefact of the low numbers of NAMP members surveyed and the inclusion of office-based offending behaviour groups. Moreover, those areas without probation projects may well have non-probation projects which may be more inclined to racing.

The issues raised by the case studies are: who attends motor projects (and by implication what sort of project might work with what sort of offender); whether projects are for offenders or crime prevention; whether projects should have workshops; management issues; numbers attending (throughput); finance; evaluation; incentives; the fit with probation practice and; public relations.

With the discussion of who attends motor projects their work comes closest to the work on joyriders discussed above. As they say:

Motor project staff broadly agree that, despite their cocky exteriors, most twockers come pretty far down the social and criminal scales. It is a crime of the inadequate, deprived, and illiterate.(1994:114)

This accords with the most recent research on joyriders and is not contradicted by the fieldwork. They go on to say, "Family disruptions are common, as is failure at school.", which is too crude a diagnostic tool to separate joyriders from other convicted criminals or many of the general population. An implicit neo-Mertonian aetiology is offered, "Their offences are snatches at the realms of power and luxury they know they can never really inhabit. They also offer a broad two category typology - younger offenders involved in twocking who may move



on to other offences and an older group who may have given up or reduced their twocking but now face difficulty in legal driving because of disqualifications from the earlier period, if they do two of the more serious offence of driving whilst disqualified is recorded.

These differences have real effects on the purpose of motor projects. Under 17s cannot drive on the roads legally and the effect of any ban only begins to bite when they are older and have given up or reduced their twocking. For these reasons motor projects aimed at the under 17s are often oriented towards prevention or diversion from the criminal justice system - hence workshops and racing - whereas over 17s are more interested in working towards legal driving. Work with younger more active twockers forms the basis for what Martin and Webster call the 'Ilderton model', named after the longest established project. Many projects have been set up along these lines but local differences have meant that none actually replicate Ilderton with its mixture of age groups and offenders and non-offenders. Some have followed the 'Ilderton model' of workshop and racing but strictly separated age groups and catered only, or mainly, for offenders with racing reserved for non-offenders or those who have finished the requirement of their probation or supervision order (for example, TRAX). Others have tackled the younger group through preventative work (such as Salford - GEARS) and still others deal with the older group completely without resort to the hands-on use of cars in office-based, 'tackling offending' groups, for example the South Glamorgan Driver Retraining Project that they discuss or the Merseyside project discussed below. They pick out the Bradford Motor Education Project as a remarkable blend of these approaches.

Whether a project has a workshop is a crucial distinction between projects, it adds an element of training and education not available to office-based projects as well as a focus for the project. That focus will often be around racing or off-road vehicle use. However, it also adds a complexity that some projects find difficult to prioritise and manage. This is often because the project's aims are insufficiently clear.

Workshops require more staff and represent a significant financial input which, in turn, require

greater management. In contrast, office-based projects like other probation programmes can be managed in-house by staff whose cost has already been found. Even where the project is wholly funded by the Probation Service - as with Ilderton - a widely-based management committee is involved. TRAX, for instance, has representatives from all youth and Criminal Justice System and senior managers and directors of several local businesses including Rover Cars and Unipart.

The numbers attending workshop groups are necessarily limited by space and further by Health and Safety considerations. This, in turn, reduces throughput. Office-based groups are generally no larger because of group dynamics but the numbers dealt with can be kept up more easily. They make the point that workshops are both capital and labour intensive so a good throughput is important to keep unit costs down. More extensive fieldwork would have revealed that whatever size workshop and whatever size group working in it will have problems of keeping a flow of work. That is projects not only face organisational problems similar to other social work settings they require production management skills. Cars have to be acquired, stripped out, modified, painted and tested before racing. The numbers of cars have be matched up with numbers of potential racers (not necessarily a car each). However, the supply of cars may dry up, good behaviour in the project may lead to more potential drivers and in the winter the numbers of races are less. Martin and Webster are sceptical of the throughput figures claimed by projects which are seeking to meet targets set when bidding for funding and in the face of an ever changing sentencing climate. Fieldwork observation and past experience as a grant-giver to projects suggests they are right to be sceptical.

The spirit of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 was encouraging to motor projects and other community penalties and magistrates were supportive of TRAX (Groombridge, 1994) However, the about turn six months after the Act's implementation (May ,1993) and Magistrates' Association Guidelines have undermined the ethos of probation-based motor projects - and, perhaps, increased the need - but not the funding - for crime prevention projects. Ilderton have always taken non-probationers and even accepted local children on

the project as part of a policy of keeping good relations with neighbours. Other projects take non-offenders but under some other scheme name. For instance, TRAX offer a workshop component to a probation order but also offer prevention and diversion work on different nights. They also deliver inputs into probation-run office-based schemes.

There may be financial reasons why some projects avoid workshops or make arrangements with local colleges as Bradford Motor Education Project have.<sup>9</sup> The financial constraints lead projects to be entrepreneurial in obtaining funds or equipment even:

...to develop facets of what, at one period, criminologists called the 'hidden economy', that world of favours and deals where goods change hands and services are rendered, but nothing appears in the accounts [...] It may be unavoidable in a time of cash limits and restraint in public expenditure, but it is a distraction from the main task." (Martin and Webster, 1994:118)

Fieldwork observation supports the view that a certain amount of 'ducking and diving' is required by projects but this is not necessarily a distraction from the main task but may in fact hold one of the keys to the successful operation of projects as it makes the project more like a real job with all its perks and privileges.

Few projects had been evaluated. Evaluation would require better record keeping. Martin and Webster (1994) call for Chief Probation Officers and the Home Office to undertake this work. The study of TRAX discussed below is by the Oxfordshire Probation Service and therefore more concerned with whether they are referring the right clients and making the right recommendations to magistrates in Pre Sentence Reports.<sup>10</sup> Most projects wanted to be evaluated, and in the contract culture that now prevails with probation services paying grants

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9. This arrangement is in part due to the refusal of the Home Office Probation Service Division to grant the full amount requested. Made for financial reasons the arrangement has proved educationally useful in linking the project and college to the benefit of both.

10. Part of my fieldwork was done whilst attempting to evaluate the TRAX project's work with non-offenders. In statistical terms this proved impossible. The project kept none of note and failed during the course of the year to introduce any suggested. The youth justice figures were kept only on an individual basis and the probation figures whilst well kept were limited to their own concerns within the limits of their database.



out of the 5% of their budget set aside for independent sector/partnership projects will need to keep and present their own figures for success or failure.

The evaluation of the crime prevention effects of motor projects is even more problematic. Most projects 'knew' that offending ceased or reduced during attendance at the project but even if car crime reduced in an area served by the project it was not possible to tie the two together. Indeed, taking a scientific realist perspective it is difficult to see how a weekly attendance at a project could achieve such a result yet most researchers in this field would agree with Martin and Webster that those attending,

are being kept out of trouble. However, this cannot be proved with scientific certainty because of taking other factors into account, such as the effects of self-selection and the level of unemployment among young men. (1994:118)

They go on to say "The problem remains that the potentially most valuable aspect of projects is the most difficult to evaluate" (1994:118). Moreover, even if motor projects could be shown to work it is even more difficult to establish what it is about motor projects that work. Is it something about workshops, the commitment of the workers or something else or a combination of these or other elements? The implicit assumption of many proponents of motor projects, in the absence of more explicit aims and objectives, amounts almost to a magical belief in the homeopathic power of the car to cure its own iatrogenic ills.

It is for these sort of reasons that Martin and Webster raise the issue of incentives, questioning whether totally office-based schemes - without the incentive of racing or driving - will be able to hold the attention of offenders whilst challenging their offending behaviour. Incentives can also bring problems in the shape of public condemnation of 'goodies for baddies'; as can be seen in the *Carweek* article discussed in Chapter 1. The very element of a project which might attract and keep offenders or potential offenders interested is attacked as being a reward for bad behaviour. Many projects have faced this accusation and the most common way of answering it is through segregation of offenders from non-offenders with only non-offenders allowed to drive or race. This, of course, conveniently ignores the fact that

many projects know that many of their 'non-offenders' are or have been offenders even if not caught and processed as such.

In an increasingly punitive climate it is not easy to simply state motor projects work and therefore should be supported. However, Martin and Webster do suggest that this argument has implicitly been working with sentencers if only because,

there was probably more scepticism about the value of custodial sentences than about motor projects. The six month custodial sentences which magistrates might be able to impose were thought to be largely ineffective as the offenders would reappear before the court soon after release.  
(1994:118-119)

Whether motor projects, or even the group work used in office-based schemes fit with the tradition of casework face to face- probation practice is raised by Martin and Webster but, perhaps, underestimates the extent of innovative work already undertaken by probation services (see Hutchins, 1993 for examples of group work; and The Howard League, 1994 and Martin, 1997 for a variety of projects). A more telling finding is their "view based on a lot of looking at projects, is that preventative work is the core activity, from which can be drawn facilities and skills to help offenders" and that there are financial reasons why they might take offenders, "Naturally they accept money to run programmes for offenders" (Martin and Webster, 1994:119).

They conclude that whilst "there is much to be said for motor projects as a constructive way of dealing with car offenders only a very small minority get sent to them." (1994:120) If this small minority were congruent with the small minority disproportionately involved in car theft and taking and driving away then this would matter little and provide a cost effective remedy. As it is not possible to be certain of this from the anecdotes of offenders, project workers and probation officers they recommend "a small study of their criminal careers and impact on victims" (1994:120).

Broadly they conclude there is no reason to end support for motor projects but that proposals

for new ones need to be examined properly and that the closer, devolved, probation service might improve this. Any scheme needs to be properly managed and that management committees should contain a mix of business and those with a knowledge of offenders. Despite being tasked to examine probation-oriented schemes they conclude that preventative schemes are more likely to gain local support and “make a contribution to civil society” (1994:120).

Finally they address some of the more serious problems that motor projects face. The sheer ease of entry to joyriding and the pleasure gained from it are difficult enough for motor projects to deal with in addition to the barriers that society erects to prevent a return to ‘normality’, to ‘civil society’. The two major barriers are disqualification and insurance. Many years after they have given up joyriding the accumulated disqualifications mean that they cannot drive legally or afford the necessary insurance because of this. Additionally the possibility of becoming a professional car thief also provides a temptation for some. They offer no policy proposals on these matters.

Discussion of the following evaluations of individual motor projects allows some of the issues raised above to be seen in context. Davies (1993) is chosen because of the spread of projects covered, those on TRAX and Ilderton are chosen as they correspond to sites of participant observation. Other evaluations are also referred to where important issues arise.

The evaluation of West Midlands Probation Service Motor Offenders Projects (Davies, 1993) includes a number of different schemes, most are Safe/Responsible driving courses and the remainder ‘Banger Racing’ projects - though the descriptions given do not make it possible to distinguish. She found that of 41 people followed up two years after attending a motor offending project 46% were not reconvicted. Moreover, onset of offending was delayed. Given the self-reported offending rate of car offenders this might be seen to be good. The trouble is that the definitions of ‘motor offenders’ and ‘motor projects’ used are very broad. ‘Motor offences’ include Taking and Driving Away but also Driving Whilst Disqualified,



Reckless Driving and Causing Death or Injury by Dangerous Driving. Occasionally figures are given for the narrower 'Motor theft-related offences' but this is still a wide category comprising TDA, interfering with a motor vehicle and allowing oneself to be carried.

In October 1992 there were (or were planned) 19 projects/programmes dealing with motor offending though only two could be seen to be projects that used cars though some of the programmes had access to motor projects or workshops. West Midlands Probation Service evaluated the existing projects by describing the 3,985 motor offenders they dealt with in 1991 (which then constituted 20% of their work and 34% of the work of the West Midlands Police) and following up 67 motor offenders who had attended three of the projects/programmes - Bordesley Activity Centre, Sandwell Responsible Road Use Course and Walsall Motoring Offenders Course. The evaluation was carried out not only to enable West Midlands to assess its needs and the effectiveness of the projects but specifically to add to the scant literature on motor projects.

Overall, 98% of the offenders were men. Only 95 women were motor offenders. Where 'race' was recorded 13% were black. Those under 21 constituted 31% of the whole sample but this rose to 64% if only motor-theft related cases were considered. The different parts of the probation area had different profiles for age, 'race' and types of crime, for instance in Wolverhampton only 4% were TDA whereas in Dudley they constituted 24% of the motoring offences. Overall the most common offences for men were Driving Whilst Disqualified (38%) and driving with Excess Alcohol (27%) with TDA 16%.

Male motor theft offenders were slightly less likely to have been in custody (18%) than the total sample (22%) but this may be as they were generally younger. In descending order the most common disposals for male motor theft offenders were: 'Other - Conditional Discharges and unrecorded outcomes' (20%); Community Service (19%); Fine (17%); and Probation (15%). Only 2% received Probation with conditions. Of the 67 male offenders followed up over a two year period 55% were under 21 and 76% recorded as white; 27% were convicted

of Driving Whilst Disqualified; 18% of TDA and about one third of theft - mostly likely a car and over 44% had received a custodial or suspended sentence in the two years prior to attendance at the project.

The programmes they attended were similar to the TRAX Car Crime Programme described in Chapter 1 but also involved some driving/racing. Completion of the programme was managed by 61% (dragged down by a 10% completion rate at one project). Factors increasing the chances of success in completing the course were: being over 21; not having a custodial sentence in the preceding two years; and having a motor related offence.

Reconvictions are often taken to be the measure of the success of non-custodial sentences and two years is the usual time over which to measure. As is rightly pointed out two years is a long time for young people and particularly in the case of offenders as prolific as car offenders. These caveats notwithstanding they found that for those who completed the course 54% were reconvicted within two years of starting the project, whereas 100% were reconvicted amongst those who failed to complete the project; only 12% were reconvicted three or more times. None of the first reconvictions were for a motor theft related offence but 24% were for Driving Whilst Disqualified and only 10% committed offences that were so serious that they resulted in custody. Unlike successful completion, age appeared not to be a factor but previous custody did have a significant effect on the likelihood of reconviction.

The sample is too small to conclude that motor projects work but suggests they can and the factors which appear to assist. They appear to be ideal for 21 year old motor offenders who are serious enough to risk custody but have not been so serious as to have already had custody. Completion of the programme is clearly essential but what is it that works? Is it the groupwork in the style of McGuire and Priestley (1985), visits from traffic police, car mechanics or the driving/racing? Only experimental variation or a massive meta analysis is likely to suggest which of the elements is most effective or whether it is the whole. Is the car the key or is it peripheral? Moore and Lloyd (1992) conclude that for some people motor projects can



provide activities that can retain their interest and offer opportunities and relationships which can increase their self-esteem.

This would certainly seem to be part of the reported and observed success of motor projects with young men. How well served are women? Of the 95 women dealt with by West Midlands Probation Service in the period only 25% were for motor-theft offences with a lower proportion (56%) being under 21. Fourteen were convicted of TDA, a very similar proportion to that for male motor theft offences. Women were more likely to be convicted of drink driving and less likely to be convicted of Driving Whilst Disqualified. None of the motor theft offenders had previous experience of custody and none received custody for their motor theft offences, 72% received Conditional Discharges - or their disposal was not recorded - none were sent to any of the projects. Even though the proportion of women convicted for offences - which might be seen as a proxy for joyriding - is similar to that for men it is not possible to say that the women identified are 'joyriders' in the sense that Jones (1993) or the media would recognize. They may have been passengers in stolen cars - as, of course, will some young men.

In its first year (up to September 1993) TRAX ran 5 Car Crime Programmes (TCCP) for a total of 30 offenders (Procter and Townsend, 1994). Bar one Asian all were white, the average age was 19. Completion rates were high at 90% for those who commenced the course (five were returned to court before starting). An important question for the probation service is whether their officers are targeting serious car offenders. Only 7% of the Service's Pre Sentence Reports (PSRs) were on Taking a Motor Vehicle without Consent, Being Carried, or Reckless or Dangerous Driving as the principal offence. It is not possible to pick out those who committed a more serious non-car related offence at the same time as one of those picked out as suitable for TCCP. Moreover, it is not possible to pick out vehicle thefts from others on the Oxfordshire Probation Service computer. This seriously hampers the search for suitable individuals who might have been missed. The most common sentencing proposal in PSRs was Community Service (34%); next was a Probation Order with no conditions (24%) followed



by Probation with a condition to attend TCCP (20%). Two young women who had allowed themselves to be carried were proposed for Community Service and Probation. Only those who had committed TWOC and Aggravated TWOC were proposed for TCCP.

At that time Oxfordshire Probation used a twenty point offence seriousness scale which, for motor-related offences, runs from 4 for allowing oneself to be carried without damage to 16 for causing death by reckless or dangerous driving. TCCP's mean seriousness score was highest of all the community sentences at 12.4. This is taken to show that, "there is little doubt that PSR writers are being very effective in their targeting of serious car offenders for the TCCP". This, however, is not the same as saying that every offender who might be suitable for TRAX is considered for it. That would require both Oxfordshire Probation Service and Youth Justice Teams to identify all serious car offenders, even if their current principal offence was not car-related. It would also require comprehensive monitoring by the managers/colleagues of potential referrers. The present gate-keeping measures ensure that those who are not suitable are kept out of the project but cannot guarantee that all who would be suitable are referred. Police and Court figures should identify the numbers of potential referrals against which the programme can measure its success in attracting and securing attendance.

Looking at acceptance onto the programme should reveal any differences between the referrers and the project, failures to persuade sentencers to accept the proposal or a failure to persuade the young person to accept the programme. This is not covered by the evaluation report. The report jumps to considering those that TRAX worked with. Since its opening - in September 1992 - TCCP had dealt with 35 car offenders (21 from the Magistrates Court, 8 from the Crown Court and 6 from the Youth Court). Aggravated TWOC was the most common main offence (43%) for those TRAX worked with followed by simple TWOC (29%) and theft of a car (14%). The mean seriousness score of those accepted was 10.5; only immediate custody was higher with 12.7.

The previous history of car offending for those on TCCP was available for 30 offenders. At

least one previous conviction for car offending was very common (83%). Five had more than 7 or more previous convictions. Whilst some would only admit to those on their records others admitted to up to 400 separate offences. Yet once started on TCCP only 3 were returned to court for breaching the conditions of the order during the programme. Only eight had completed their probation order, five successfully and three unsuccessfully following a further offence.

Ten of the twenty seven - who completed TCCP successfully - were reconvicted of a car offence within six months, but six of these were less serious offences. The failure rate over two years is likely to be higher as the effect of the programme wanes. Indeed it is difficult to see how an eight week course could even be expected to have the good results it does given the ease and attractions of car offending. What needs to be considered is how the effectiveness of the course can be extended.

The Ilderton project is particularly important as it has been established longest, served as a model for many other projects and a caution to others. It is the stereotypical 'banger' project. Given its pre-eminent position it could expect to have been evaluated extensively. This is not the case, however it has still been the subject or the site of a number of investigations. Discussed below in chronological order are Pearce and Thornton (1980) *The Ilderton Motor Project (A Model Experiment in the Treatment of Autocrime Offenders)* and Wilkinson and Morgan (1995) *The Impact of Ilderton Motor Project on motor vehicle crime and offending* with reference to Broad (1982) and undated reports from the project itself.

The Ilderton Motor Project was founded in 1975, five years after the Advisory Council on the Penal System recommended such centres. Five years later the Chief Probation Officer for Inner London and the Commander of the Community Relations Branch turned their attention to the project (Pearce and Thornton, 1980). The paper is not so much an evaluation but a description of the motor project and the juvenile bureaux that supplied many of its customers with appendices showing the extent of the problem. That said they make some points that are



still pertinent.

In the opening page they go straight to the problem that Martin and Webster (1994) save for their final page, the matter of disqualification. They ask, “whether it is worth tolerating a system that is inefficient and ineffective for actual offenders because it is believed to be effective for in deterring potential ones” going on to say, “There is an urgent need for sentencing practices and attitudes to be reviewed and hopefully changed if we are not to persist in wastefully reinforcing failure in these auto-crime cases.” (Pearce and Thornton, 1980:1) Quite.

They add a historical dimension by asserting, “It is perhaps the use of ‘disqualification to drive’ that the courts reflect most clearly some outdated assumptions about motoring offenders. Car owners originally came from mainly wealthy people whose social attitudes, in general, recognised legal authority and who were seen to be different from ‘ordinary’ anti-authority criminals” (1980:1-2) As some of the historical material in Chapter 1 shows car drivers, whatever their social class, have sought to avoid the controls imposed by authority on their car use.

Drawing on, but not citing, Sykes and Matza (1957) Pearce and Thornton note, “the delinquent adopts defensive attitudes towards authority [...] claims that authority figures are hypocritical, unfair or incompetent..” (1980:4). For this reason ‘conventional methods of treatment’ are not appropriate for auto-offenders but that a strategy of using “cars as an indirect approach to resocialisation rather than ignoring their significance” (1980:6).

Moreover, “It was thought important to have a mixed rather than an all delinquent group so that as far as possible the pro-social attitudes of the volunteers might begin imperceptibly to rub off on the offender.” (1980:7)

Perhaps, mindful of the ‘goodies for baddies’ argument they also note, “Surprisingly perhaps, the amount of time spent by each youth behind the wheel of a car on the race track each year does not amount to more than 10 minutes in total”, suggesting that, “the motivation in this



respect concerns the 'taking part in a race' and not necessarily the driving" (1980:12). More explicitly addressing this issue they recommend that, "such facilities need to be more generally available, and perhaps should be part of the modern education process as it is in America" (1980:14)

More controversially, though they do not follow through on the observation, they argue that, "Cars are an integral status symbol in all classes of society and car manufacturers invest millions to ensure that they remain so. The desire to possess a car is *knowingly implanted* in people's minds at a very early age, but must be frustrated until the legal age for driving, (seventeen) is reached." (1980:12 emphasis added). Thus a potentially radical critique of car culture becomes Mertonian strain. Rather than attempt a reform, far less a revolution, of car culture they seek to relieve the symptom of frustration by, "the radical approach of trying to give them what they sought to obtain by committing offences" (1980:13). They feel unable to make comparisons between districts to see whether the project has impacted on car crime in the area but note that, "of some 140 offenders who have attended the Centre, further conviction rates for offences involving cars has varied between 18-23% over the last three years" (1980:13)

Broad (1982) was carrying out his fieldwork around this time and refers to the report of Pearce and Thornton (1980). The descriptions he gives of the project (and those of Pearce and Thornton, 1980) are largely accurate today. He was attempting to examine the activity beyond that offered by the banger racing. At that time casework was the standard Probation Service model. He notes that alternatives to this struggled to survive and often emerged as 'specialist units' with an experimental brief. Whilst groupwork is more common within the probation service now and many specialisms have been added to the menu of probation practice these comments still have resonance today as Martin and Webster (1994) also found.

During a three week period Broad compiled sociograms of interaction between members and staff in both the workshop and clubroom, asked open-ended questions of staff and

participated in the life of the project, including being interviewed for a prospective TV programme about the project. Whilst Broad coded as positive most behaviour in the workshop the elected team leaders were more concerned about what they saw as their car and in clubroom discussions took no responsibility for their team. In the clubroom, interactions were between individuals and the group with staff provoking necessary discussion on "group cohesiveness, responsibility and accountability" (1982:80). Particularly noticeable from his participant observation was that, "All the volunteers are chosen for their particular, some might say fanatical interest in motor cars" (1982:81).

Broad mentions an incident where a particularly successful racer admits that the reason why he is reluctant to enter a race which would reflect well on the project is that he is scared. He had witnessed a clubmate roll his car in a previous race. Whilst some "displayed a somewhat 'macho' attitude towards the more dangerous aspects of racing, by far the majority of the group adopted a more understanding and tolerable (tolerant?) attitude" (1982:85). In these and other sessions skills of listening and talking are developed. The interviews with staff revealed a tendency to see 'societal' rather than 'personal' reasons for their 'clients' offending; examples were 'lack of education', 'no money' and 'under the legal driving age' (1982:90).

Only very basic information was available about those attending (29) but from March 1981 to March 1982 the average period of attendance was six months, average age was 17 and the majority were attending voluntarily. Exacerbating the sketchy information kept by the project is the difficulty of following up whether or not the clients re-offended. However, of the 29 who attended during the year only 3 were asked to leave for committing an auto-crime and 8 were known to have re-offended within 3 months. This is not enough to say that the project stops car theft but Broad concludes, "it is reasonable to suggest that, whatever else the motor project achieves in practical terms, it does more good than harm in terms of personal and social developments" (1982:98). Regular attendance was associated with a slight improvement in behaviour as assessed by project leader and referring agencies.



Broad concludes that the relationships the project has established, particularly with the local community, contribute to the atmosphere. Earning the right to race puts them in competition with each other and at races in competition "Felons and non-felons mix freely" (1982:101) yet collective responsibility is emphasised. He found that whilst the project aimed for behaviour modification through informal processes it did little to test whether it had achieved those goals or seek feedback from referring agencies.

At that time the project took no one on probation conditions but the 1989 Annual Report indicated that the project was an 'alternative to custody' and 4 places were held for those on Community Service Orders (but they could not race). The report contains many pictures of the work of the project the Chairman's report, project leaders report, accounts, some statistics, a call for more research and the heartwarming tales of 'Dave', 'Fergus' and 'Mark R'. For the year 1 April 1988 to 31 March 1989 a total of 52 attended the project, nearly double the figures given to Broad 7 years earlier. The figures for reconviction relate only to whilst attending the project rather than after and therefore do not relate directly to those at the project then, but in that period 14 were reconvicted, mostly the under 16 age group (11). A further report, undated but probably 1993, forswears statistics and concentrates on pictures, laudatory articles and two more 'life histories'.

However, the most recent and comprehensive evaluation by Wilkinson and Morgan (1995) comes complete with press release claiming, "New research indicates that the pioneering Ilderton Motor Project in Lewisham has a significant impact in reducing the scale and seriousness of offending of those who attend it." Some time will be spent discussing their findings because they tie in a number of issues about motor projects and joyriding, particularly the issue of specialisation. Thirty five offenders who had been supervised by the Inner London Probation Service at Ilderton between January 1987 and March 1994 were selected. A matching group of 40 were selected to represent what might have happened to the Ilderton group had there been no intervention.



A number of methodological issues arise here. It is a commonplace that attempts to measure re-offending have to rely on the less accurate reconviction rate. They chose to use arrest figures, (excluding those where acquittal but not discontinuance occurred). They recognize that this would be unacceptable on civil liberties grounds for making decisions about those involved but argue it provides a better measure of true offending as it overcomes the problem of one incident leading to a number of charges or a number of incidents being dealt with at one hearing. It also deals with the problem of time lags in conviction and sentencing which produce 'pseudo reconvictions' - offences committed before the sentence but after the committing of the offence for which that sentence is given.

The comparison group was selected 'blind' from the Inner London Probation Service (ILPS) database to match the Ilderton group by offending career and a reference offence that could have brought them to Ilderton. To test the specific impact of a motor project on car-crime they grouped, what they call, taking and driving away, allowing to be carried, motor vehicle interference, theft from a motor vehicle, going equipped for motor vehicle interference, reckless driving and other traffic violations. Whilst these are obviously related the inclusion of 'theft from' and the traffic offences might have an effect but this is not discussed. They give comparisons between the two groups. A selection of this material is set out in the table 2.2 below.

Table 2.1 Comparing the Ilderton and comparison group adapted from Wilkinson and Morgan (1995)

	Ilderton	comparison
number	35	40
male	100%	100%
black/'other'	17%	15%
employed/education	1	1
average age at ref. offence	19.4	18.4
offences before ref. offence	6.6	5.4
'TDAs' before ref. offence	4.9	2.5
proportion of offences TDA	74%	46%
proportion in custody 2 years before ref. offence	26%	25%
average time at Ilderton	14 months	n/a
average follow up	47 months	48 months

They provide additional comparative information and discuss some of the matters arising. These and other matters are discussed below. It is also necessary to compare both these groups with those supervised by ILPS more generally, this will be done as discussion proceeds. The numbers examined are small. It would have been useful to have had an estimate of the proportion of Ilderton attenders that the numbers represent. Elsewhere they accept the estimate of Martin and Webster (1994) that throughput is 15 a year. Therefore between January 1987 and March 1994 we might have expected 100 offenders passing through the project, however, some of those would attend for so short a time that no effect could be expected.

All of those studied were male but this passes without comment. They note that the numbers of 'black and other' at 17% and 15% is low compared to 30% for the rest of ILPS client group. They make no comment on this either (such issues are taken up in Chapter 3). At 19.4 and 18.4 years of age those who attend are younger than the average for those whom ILPS prepared a pre sentence report by ten years and six years younger than ILPS 'TDA' clients. Only one each of the two samples was in employment or education. Again no comment is made on this. It is indicative of the state of offender employment that this is not worthy of comment.

The numbers of offences before the reference offence and the proportion of those who had been in custody within the past two years are indicative of the seriousness of the offending behaviour being dealt with. This is further reinforced by the PSR prediction - for both groups - that three quarters would be reconvicted within two years. The average follow up period for both groups at nearly 4 years is good for such an evaluation and represents a long period in the career of a car criminal. However, the upper range of the follow up may explain the high average. The range for the Ilderton group was 10 to 106 months and 14 to 97 months for the comparison group.

The issue of the age of the sample is important for a number of reasons. First it has an impact



on the numbers of offences that have been committed. Were the comparison group less criminal as the numbers of previous offences suggest or, because younger, had they not hit their criminal peak? Wilkinson and Morgan are sensitive to this and explore some possibilities. They rightly note that "TDA is regarded as an offence usually committed by relatively young offenders" (1995:8) but because both the Ilderton and comparison group are substantially younger than the average for which ILPS prepares PSRs and the long follow up period they conclude that, "the Ilderton group is not significantly closer than the comparison group to "growing out of crime" (1995:8) and "none of the age and attendance based differences in offending attain statistical significance" (1995:9). Two interesting observations can be made; first "Ilderton seems to bring about the largest reduction in all types of crime with older offenders" and secondly that, "The largest reductions in TDA offending occur with younger offenders." (1995:9). Here they are talking about a comparison made between the 'young' group - all those below 18 years 6 months (the median age of the groups combined) - and the 'old' group - all those above.

It is true that the Ilderton group and the comparison group are younger than the average of ILPS TDA clients group but they are still old for what might be called the classical joyriders studied by (Light *et al*, 1993) and are at or above the peak age for male offending. This leads to consideration of their definition of TDA. As was mentioned earlier the traffic violations are not exclusive to those who drive other people's cars so a different picture might emerge if those offences and theft from a motor vehicle were stripped out. However, even if TDA alone were the subject of the analysis then other problems arise. Motor projects in their widest definition may be dealing with motor crime - that is taking of cars as well as bad driving of owned ones - but the stereotypical motor project, the banger project - and Ilderton is the banger project par excellence - is set up to deal with joyriding. Now as Chapter 1 sketched out there is no one definition of joyriding and both the practice and the label have changed over time. It would have been useful if some attempt had been made to operationalise a concept of the joyrider and seen whether the project worked for joyriders, car thieves or offenders more generally. Of course, ILPS, as funders, are more interested in whether the project works for



those they send there. Within the data they gathered the nearest proxy for joyriding over car theft is age. An analysis of those under 17 would certainly have been useful.

Specialisation, or 'offence specificity' as they call it, is one of the issues arising from the literature on joyriding. In trying to establish whether Ilderton could be said to work they discovered evidence of specialisation. As the discussion above shows the specialisation they have shown is for a bundle of offences that they call TDA. They discuss that explicitly but do not ask whether joyriding may be a minority activity within that bundle which results in the same offences but may have different motivations, patterns and outcomes. However, what they do discover about specialisation is worth examining.

They cite Harraway as describing a type of offender that probation officers identify, the "TDA merchant" and the "car freak" (1986:55). Fieldwork confirms the widespread acceptance amongst probation officers and youth workers of this type of offender. However, most of the literature on criminal careers (for instance Farrington 1992) contradicts this except for sex offenders and long term fraudsters. Home Office research from 1985 cited by Tarling (1994) showed that of 43,400 convicted of motoring offences - including TDA - only 22% were reconvicted of an offence in the same category. This work might be criticised that the offence categories are too broad to reveal true specialism in offending, let alone behaviour such as joyriding which is hard to define and detect.

What they discovered was that 74% and 46% of the Ilderton and comparison group respectively had convictions for TDA. Whilst this adds fuel to the debate about whether there are offence specialists the most pressing point for them is put succinctly, "If specialist TDA offenders can not be shown to exist, then in terms of 'treating' offenders at least, the thinking behind motor projects is generally flawed." (1995:3) This echoes Jones (1993) concern that motor projects had not thought through their *raison d'être*. However, they do not ask the question the other way round. That question might be formulated thus, 'Is car-crime/TDA/joyriding so specialist that the specialist treatment- motor project - will not work for

less specialist offenders?" They don't ask this question but their age findings suggests that Ilderton may work better with 'young' TDA offenders and 'older' general offenders, which raises the question of whether Ilderton is specialist enough or whether motor projects could be used for the generality of offenders.

The final question then, 'does it work?' Broadly yes, as 75% were predicted to reoffend within two years. As it was 91% of the comparison group reoffended but only 65% of the Ilderton group (which was statistically significant at the .01 level). Moreover, at the same point the Ilderton group had committed 2.3 offences against the comparison groups 3.7. The reduction in numbers offending and numbers of offences comes through in sentencing too. Again at the two year point 15% of the Ilderton group as opposed to 46% of the comparison group had been sent to custody (again statistically significant). The effect is even more pronounced at the three year point where only 10% of the Ilderton group had gone to custody against 57% of the comparison group.

Ilderton also appears to work specifically on TDA. Within one year 29% of Ilderton group had committed TDA whereas 53% of the comparison group had. By the end of three years 43% of the Ilderton group and 80% of the comparison group had committed TDA offences. This enables the claim to be made, "that the reduction in offending amongst the Ilderton group is disproportionately the result of a decrease in TDA offending" (Wilkinson and Morgan, 1995:8).

These effects can be seen in the two age groups they examine. Thus at two years the 'young' group 71% of the Ilderton group had reoffended against 86% of the comparison group but the figures for TDA are 36% and 76% respectively. For the 'old' group the reoffending figures at the same point are 62% and 100% but with the TDA figures almost inseparable at 54% and 57%. The custody figures given are not differentiated by age.

Wilkinson and Morgan calculate that the effect size of the reduction in offending is  $r=0.26$ . This compares very favourably with Lipsey's (1992) meta-analysis of 397 projects for treating



juveniles of  $r=0.013$ . Having shown that Ilderton 'works' they conclude: "How Ilderton Motor Project achieves reduced re-offending, and with which offenders Ilderton is most likely to succeed remains a subject for further research" (1995:10)

The Merseyside Probation Service Car Offender Project (COP) is a programme of work with serious car offenders is entirely within the probation service but involves other agencies both statutory and voluntary.<sup>11</sup> They sought to develop a programme that was a) victim centred; b) involved other agencies; c) dealt with serious offenders and d) emphasised safe driving.

There is also a motor project in Merseyside which COP use.

The programme, initially for 10-12 people, has now grown to one for 20-24. It involves 18 two hour sessions to including inputs from: Police; the local Accident and & Emergency Department; Road Safety Officers; Anfield Women's Group and the Association of British Insurers.<sup>12</sup> It involves some mechanics and right at the end of the course they do allow some driving at the Motor Project and encourage graduation to the Motor Project where they can do City and Guilds courses in mechanics.

From October 1992-93 there were 346 referrals to COP which lead to 165 orders with a condition to attend the Project, 113 received custody, 30 were fined or received CSO, 14 were deemed unsuitable for the project as not sufficiently serious offenders and 24 were still outstanding. Of the 165 orders, 70 started and completed, 3 started and were breached, 92 were awaiting a place. At the Crown Court 64 proposals lead to 26 being sent to project. Their monitoring revealed that of 22 black men (6.3% of the sample), 18 were recommended as suitable for the project but 11 went to custody and only 7 to the project, 2 were deemed

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11. The figures and discussion are based on a workshop presentation at the 'What Works - Making It Happen' Conference 7-9 September 1994 University of Salford by Barry Goldson Dept of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, University of Liverpool and Steve Pimblett, Probation Officer, Merseyside Probation Service.

12. The Anfield Women's Group is a prisoners' wives and family support group. It can be seen as representing the interests of the families of joyriders, an often ignored group of victims - there had been attacks on the homes of joyriders.



unsuitable and 2 remained outstanding. They recognize that though the percentage is about right for case load and local demographics it may be too high for relative involvement. Of six white women (1.7% of the total) 4 were recommended for the project 3 went, 1 received custody and 1 is outstanding. There were no black women.

From March '93 to August '93 49 people completed the programme, most were under 21, only 12 (25%) were reconvicted 12-17 months later. The researchers now plan a more qualitative evaluation where those completing the course, judges, POs, police, and all involved with the project are interviewed in depth. They also intend looking at drivers who Drive Whilst Disqualified as they see that to be a growing problem.

### The literature on masculinities and crime

P J O'Rourke may be being ironic when he says in his essay 'How to Drive Fast on Drugs While Getting Your Wing-Wang Squeezed and Not Spill Your Drink' that he favours:

... a rented car. Nothing handles better than a rented car. You can go faster, turn corners sharper, and put the transmission into reverse while going forward [...] You can park without looking. (1987:130)

O'Rourke's quote perfectly describes the joys of a stolen car (as revealed in the literature and through fieldwork). His style and subject matter is unashamed - he revels in being a man. However, over the last twenty years, starting in the United States of America men influenced by feminism and sometimes by gay explorations have started to question the costs and benefits of being a man. This 'self-help' literature has grown and is now joined by sociological and psycho-analytic studies. Whilst crime and deviance may be mentioned few books specifically address the issue of crime and masculinities. Influenced by radical feminism some male writers have taken on the issue of men's violence and use of pornography (Funk, 1993 and Stoltenberg, 1989). However, the guilt that men are invited to feel about their behaviour towards women can lead to paralysis (Groombridge, 1995d). Others suggest that women have feminised men and propose a return of the 'Wild' man (Bly, 1990) or that women are no

longer prepared to kiss enough frogs to create fairytale princes (Dench, 1994).

The terrain continues to be contested between what might be called 'real men' and 'pro-feminist' factions. There is a theoretical gain to be made by not talking about masculinity - something that 'real men' possess and all others aspire to - but masculinities - something all men (and some women) can possess, achieve or continuously 'do'. Where criminology, usually under the influence of feminism or by feminists, has addressed gender it has been to note its poor treatment of women. These issues are taken up more fully in chapter 7.

Forty years ago sub-cultural theorists like Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1961) specifically addressed the issue of men and crime. That they did so in highly traditional ways - that have rightly been criticised by feminists - is not doubted. For twenty years the assumptions they made, if not the precise content of the theories, remained uncontested until second wave feminism eventually turned its attention to criminology and the sociology of deviance.

Feminism may have silenced the most obvious sexism of male criminologists and lead some women to depart the field (Smart, 1990) but it has prompted others to examine the gender issues from the perspective of men and masculinity. The foremost examples are the collection edited by Newburn and Stanko (1994) and the theoretical advances made by Messerschmidt (1993) which are referred to extensively in Chapter 7.

Campbell's (1993) work directly engages with the problem of men and crime from a feminist perspective without relying on sex-role theory or resorting to simple men-blaming. Though written by a journalist it stands comparison with the 'classic' sub-cultural theorists. Her work has already been referred to in earlier in respect of joyriding. Therefore the work of Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin and Campbell is discussed below.

In *Delinquent Boys: the Culture of Gangs* Cohen introduces the book with an imagined folksy



discussion of a mother's concern for her "Johnny" who is a "good boy but got to running around with the wrong bunch and got into trouble" (1955:11). He patronisingly imagines her and her neighbours various common-sense theories of delinquency and renders them into 'sociologese'. He accepts the mothers version of cultural transmission/differential association - "the wrong bunch" - but directs his attention to what he calls "an Unsolved Problem in Juvenile Delinquency", "why is there such a subculture?" (1955:18) He specifically rejects "psychogenic" explanations that suggest children are born or can be made delinquent.

In brief he theorises that some working class boys - and he is clear he is talking about boys - cannot hope to succeed in an America that values middle-class male norms of success. They therefore collectively solve their failure within a subculture that reacts against the success instrumentality of the middle class male by engaging in expressive delinquency. It can therefore be seen as a sort of strain theory. However, for middle class boys the strain is not fear of economic failure but what might be called masculinity strain - though as we shall see these are related. The working class boy might be frustrated in his attempts to achieve middle class norms, typically represented by the demands of school, but he is likely to move more quickly into a job and therefore take up the full responsibilities of the working class adult male. Whereas the middle class boy has to delay this gratification in longer schooling and professional education before more smoothly occupying his economic place in the world, and therefore relieving his 'masculine strain'. These two differing strains on boys may lead to delinquency. It is this 'masculine strain' that explains joyriding for Gibbens (1958) amongst, otherwise less 'delinquent' boys. The delinquency of girls - of either class - is less because the same strains are not seen in girls roles - which are seen as essentially relational - and neither is the 'solution' of delinquency appropriate. If girls do offend it is "overwhelmingly of sexual delinquency" (Cohen, 1955:144) in the cause of getting a boy. It is the getting of a partner that is the strain for girls. Most commentators concentrate on Cohen's ideas about working class boys or his sexism so fail to note the emphasis that he gives to masculinity. Where Miller's work on gangs suggested working class boys exaggerated the masculine virtues of working class "focal concerns" Cohen has them reacting to middle class norms.



Where Cohen acknowledges his intellectual debts to Sutherland and Parsons, Cloward and Ohlin's *Delinquency and Opportunity: a Theory of Delinquent Gangs* is dedicated to Merton and Sutherland. The book's purpose is to answer two questions "(1) Why do delinquent 'norms' or rules of conduct, develop? (2) What are the conditions which account for the distinctive content of various systems of delinquent norms - such as those prescribing violence or theft or drug use?" (1961:ix). As we shall see in Chapter 7 they do - unlike others - consider but eventually reject Cohen's 'masculine identification crisis' theory but, following Sutherland accept the cultural transmission of the gang's norms. They elaborate on Merton's strain theory by suggesting not only that legitimate opportunities are blocked which might lead to deviant innovation, ritualism, retreatism or rebellion but that illegitimate opportunities may be blocked too and rather than seek individual solutions a subcultural one is chosen. Therefore different patterns of illegal opportunity would lead the delinquent to join 'conflict', 'criminal' or 'retreatist' subcultures, with the 'retreatist' one being seen as a more individual solution.

Taylor, Walton and Young note the improvement that Cloward and Ohlin make on Merton but criticize the adherence to the "one all-embracing goal, monetary success" (1973:134) which would have caused them difficulty assimilating "Black Panthers" or "hippies" within their scheme. Cohen is implicitly criticised for assuming a similarly pre-eminent position for middle-class values and explicitly for misreading Merton in believing that only one goal was possible.

Writing over thirty years later in *Goliath: Britain's dangerous places* Campbell deploys her journalistic talents and commitment to feminism to sustain an argument about men and crime which is polemical but also alive to academic concerns and policy issues.<sup>13</sup> Its immediate provenance were the 'riots' of 1991 in Cardiff, Oxford and Newcastle (her home town) but Walklate (1995) correctly places it within a concern with what the, then, Prime Minister, John Major, called 'yob culture'. He and the media recognised the maleness of this culture but

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13. This book has now been brought to the stage by Bryony Lavery (The Bush Theatre August 1997).

spent as much time blaming the mothers. What most commentators were unwilling to articulate was that it might be the maleness of the culture that was problematic. Others did recognize the issue of masculinity but posed it in these terms - masculine identity requires a job therefore unemployment causes a 'crisis of masculinity' which leads to crime.

Whilst the most controversial aspects of what she says have concerned the issue of masculinity her discussion of it is located within an account that recognises the high unemployment, housing tenure patterns and the reality of single motherhood and the role of state policy in these areas. That is it is not a theory of crime as understood by traditional mainstream criminology. Crime is treated as part of the landscape she describes but one which actively forms - sometimes very actively in the shape of burnt out cars - that landscape but is formed by it too.

Only within these structural, cultural and locality based terms can the assertion that "Crime and coercion are sustained by men. Solidarity and self-help are sustained by women" (1993:319) be seen as more than just blaming for men. Men are held responsible for the crime and the State's coercive response to it, both of which impact on the lives of the women - who emerge as the heroes of her book. Women and communities suffer as police and joyriders fight for the right to use the streets as they see fit. So crime is not caused by a 'crisis of masculinity' related to a loss of employment but that employment, leisure and crime always offered men a way to be both breadwinner and have fun outside of the home. Unemployment has therefore reduced the opportunities for men to be masculine, by their own lights. Those men with employment, such as police officers, state officials, journalists and so on, can continue to affirm their masculinity through work, leisure and condemnation of the jobs and their mothers. Women's opportunities continue to be constrained by the economy and men.<sup>14</sup>

Where Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin accept uncritically gender - in fact, sex - differences that play through into crime Campbell takes on board class, race, gender and sexuality but still

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14. Harman (1993) puts this more positively by arguing that women have already entered the twenty first century whereas men remain stuck in the twentieth.



finds it is young men who are committing the crime that attracts headlines. The arguments may have got more sophisticated but the problem appears to be the same. No wonder criminology prefers to ignore issues of masculinity.

### Conclusion

As can be seen the literature specifically on joyriding is sparse and reaches broadly common-sense conclusions about the ease of stealing cars and fun to be obtained from doing so. The only unexpected element is the early literature suggesting that joyriding might be carried out by the less delinquent. This runs contrary to the contemporary perception of joyriding as the epitome of dangerous delinquency promoted by the media and politicians. Most of the criminological literature on juvenile delinquency more generally makes no mention of joyriding or does so in ways that suggest it was not much of a problem or was simply symptomatic of a more generalised delinquency.

Given the paucity of work on joyriders the greatest repository of knowledge about it resides in the notes and memories of probation officers and social workers involved with joyriders. However, in the absence of an academic input about joyriding their individual casework responses and more particularly the collective (groupwork) solution of motor projects represents a practical knowledge of joyriding. The demands of funders for evaluation and of projects for publicity is bringing about a growing literature on whether individual projects work but there is still little theoretical input into considering what might work and why.

Of all the work that is reviewed only Campbell looks at both joyriding and masculinity, and then only in passing. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 seek to incorporate such insights about masculinity and relate them to joyriding and to the projects that are aimed at preventing, diverting or rehabilitating joyriders. The next chapter leads directly from this discussion of what the literature says to an analysis of the themes that arise.



### CHAPTER 3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM: AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

In his foreword to Willett (1973), Mannheim notes the extent to which criminology has ignored the changes wrought by the car. The literature set out in chapter 2 and further discussed below can be seen as contributing, if only implicitly, to criminology's attempts to come to terms with the car and what is here called car culture.

There is some overlap between the literature on joyriding and motor projects because the research on joyriding has often been carried out at motor projects. Given the overwhelming preponderance of male car offenders there ought to be more overlap between these literatures and those on masculinity but other than occasional references to 'macho' this is not the case. For analytical simplicity the literature on joyriding, motor projects and masculinities will be set out separately below. First though the methods used by the researchers discussed in Chapter 2 are critically examined as they have crucially influenced what they found.

#### The methodologies of the literature discussed in Chapter 2

Most of the literature on joyriding discussed in Chapter 2 is focussed on why 'they' do it. So even if the researchers deploy a number of methods (and most do) the intention of the research is policy orientated. It is tempting to lump them all together as 'positivistic', as both feminists and Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) would understand it, but Briggs (1991) for instance, uses interviews, a survey and observation as well as documents (letters from joyriders in prison to their mates and the records of the agency). However, this breadth of techniques are all focussed on identifying and defining "the factors that cause and/or facilitate" joyriding (Briggs, 1991:abstract) to which end he seeks "first of all, to look at the problem of joyriding from the perspective of the young offenders involved", but only, as he goes on to admit, "as a way to determine how they make sense of their actions" (1991:3). He therefore uses some 'positivistic' methods and some more 'naturalistic' ones. Even if the 'offender' is given the chance to give their perspective it is always on why they do it. Since he

was dealing with young men who were all convicted or self-confessed joyriders the term 'offender' is technically unobjectionable but it does serve to separate them from the researcher and reader not only as the object of the research but as the officially denigrated object of research. Such an approach necessarily privileges official discourses over those of the young men he studied. Where he uses empathetic methods it is to gain the 'facts' that will be their undoing. As a former auto-engineer, Briggs was in a good position to be empathetic yet his interviews go straight to the offending, "How old were you when you first chorred (stole) a motor car," "Right Mark, I just want you to tell me, without exaggeration if you can, facts relating to twocking. You are 15 years and eight months old. How long have you been chorryng cars?" and "You're not yet seventeen. How many cars do you think you've taken unlawfully since your first one?" (1991:53,58 and 66) He then runs them through: what sort of cars; how they gain entry; where they steal from; how they drive and how fast; what their feeling for the victims are etc.

Light *et al* (1993) specifically offer the "Offender's Perspective" on "Car Theft" achieved by conducting 100 semi-structured interviews with car thieves aged 14-35 throughout England and Wales contacted through motor projects, probation day centres and NACRO training centres. However, and not unsurprising given the Home Office sponsorship, the questions on which the 'offenders' (again) are asked for their perspective are concerned with why they do it, and what situational measures or criminal justice sanctions are most likely to deter them.

Also officially sponsored (Sunderland Safer Cities Project) and published by the Home Office Spencer (1992) adopts a wider approach not only interviewing 'offenders' about all the same things that Briggs (1991) and Light *et al* (1993) do but also surveying 86 local school children about wider issues concerned with the Estate where joyriding was prevalent not asking about car theft until half way through the questionnaire. Similarly a group discussion at the local youth club focussed on why 'friends of friends' stole cars.

Whilst all these recent studies use surveys and sufficiently structured interviews to generate



tables and graphs these positivistic methods are used to get at the meaning of the joyriders actions. However, those meanings are not in a tradition of Weberian *verstehen* but directed towards correcting the behaviour of the joyrider, the design of cars or the range of penal measures. A good picture emerges of what the typical joyrider is like, when they start, what cars they prefer, how they get into and start them, whether alarms or the criminal justice system can deter them. The settings chosen and the small samples mean that reliability might be a problem but neither my research nor any others have invalidated the findings.

One reason for this, is that the biographical and demographic details of joyriders appear no different to many other offenders, or indeed non-offenders. Thus Light *et al* (1993) found that 15 was the most common age to start (26 out of one hundred) and that most came from lower social classes, lived at home with at least one parent (44% both and 26% one parent) in homes where crime was disapproved of but not unknown. Many were unemployed (49%). Briggs (1991) mentions poverty, family breakdown, poor school achievement or attendance and inner city location. Spencer (1993) picks up on the area characteristics of the Estate 2.7% of the population had convictions or cautions for taking without consent as opposed to .08% of the population of England and Wales. It is not clear whether this is proposed as cause or effect. That is does the area have many of the people likely to take cars (for instance: poor, unemployed, carless) and therefore the figure merely records this or does the number of existing offenders itself create further deviance through 'differential association' (Sutherland and Cressey, 1947) or attract increased police attention to 'primary deviance' and thereby guarantee 'secondary deviance' (Lemert, 1971). The findings that joyriders sometimes truant to joyride again does not indicate the direction of causality.

These points about Briggs (1991), Light *et al* (1993) and Spencer (1993) are intended not to highlight methodological deficiencies which would invalidate their research but to note the focus and setting of their work which inevitably leads to theoretical narrowness and purely policy-related conclusions. It also leads, as Light *et al* (1993) recognize themselves, to an over representation of offenders thought suitable for the programmes at which they were



interviewed (ie later in their 'careers' but not sufficiently serious to warrant custody) and to being "uninformative on car offending within other social groups" (1993:2).

These studies clearly fall within what Young (1994) calls 'new administrative criminology'. The disposition of offenders, the meanings they attach to their offending, its wider significance nor its similarity to legitimated activity are not considered relevant. Questions about what sort of car, where they are stolen and how all help with the market research of Government, car manufacturers, car accessory manufacturers (considerable beneficiaries of car crime and fear of car crime), car park operators, police and planners etc. The class, gender and 'race' of offenders are not seen as relevant to the purely situational measures such as increased perimeter security of cars or car parks and only slightly significant in terms of criminal justice sanctions. The only point made about class by Briggs (1991:3) is his contention that, "Middle and upper class adolescents may joyride in their parents', their friends' or even their own cars". Neither Light *et al* (1993) nor Spencer (1993) touch on these issues. Light *et al* (1993) interviewed two girls but thereafter the experience of these young women is aggregated with the young men so that throughout the report reference is made to 'young people'. Clearly two in one hundred is too small a number on which to base any statistical argument but to submerge their voice whilst claiming to be giving the "Offender's Perspective" is unhelpful. Briggs (1991) identified one girl but she refused to cooperate. 'Race' is totally ignored and as we saw in Chapter 2 Wilkinson and Morgan (1995) made nothing of the disparity between the proportion of ILPS workload who are black and those attending the Ilderton Motor Project.

As Chapter 2 shows and the discussion above emphasises previous studies of joyriding concentrate on and therefore give a good picture of the typical young, male, unemployed, white, car-mad, convicted 'joyrider'. They tell us little about joyriding as a cultural practice with roots in - and routes back to - a wider car culture. It is therefore necessary to note the scope of the methods previously used and particularly the low profile of methodological concerns for the researchers. For them, methodological problems are very briefly noted before moving on to produce the graphs and percentages that policy-makers demand. It is argued that this

Fordist 'production line' technique is inappropriate and that a hand built method is needed to examine the full extent and meaning of joyriding. This is addressed in Chapter 4.

#### Common ground in the literature on joyriding

The first thing to be noted is the small scale of most of the studies; for instance: Light *et al*'s study (1993) interviewed 100 'joyriders', Briggs (1991) interviewed 30 and analysed 200 questionnaires and Gibbens (1958) studied 50 borstal boys. The only large scale research is the American work of McCaghy *et al* (1977) who studied: 103 records of arrest in Toledo from October 1975 to May 1976; 231 records of autotheft from January 1975 to April 1976 and studied the records of 14,815 juveniles before the courts of Virginia from 1966 to mid 1973. Spencer's research (1991) though small scale attempted to gain a rounded picture by means of: a social profile of the Pennywell Estate; a profile of autocrime on the Estate; a questionnaire to 86 male juveniles through schools; interviews with nine 10-15 year olds at the local Youth Club and seventeen interviews with offenders aged 13-19 arranged through Probation. A questionnaire through the Probation Service went unanswered. Not only are most of the studies small but they also have a tendency to go over the same policy- related questions about situational crime prevention and criminal justice deterrence. They are largely atheoretical or 'pop' psychological.

The literature agrees that young men steal cars initially for excitement under peer pressure but increasingly for money. Despite the frequent mentions of the 'buzz' associated with joyriding the work of Katz (1988) is not mentioned. His work is not referred to here because the 'seductiveness' of joyriding is accepted and the 'sensual attractions' not followed up. Joyriding starts young and may be associated with other offending. It is intense and persistent. If not addictive it is certainly an effective 'solution' (Downes 1966) which is frequently and easily resorted to. It is less clear to what it is a 'solution' - unemployment, boredom and adolescent masculinity are all mentioned in passing.



Themes that consistently appear in the literature on joyriding are: 1) the argument about whether there is a car theft/joyriding specialism or whether, in the words of the Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention (1988:19, emphasis added), "there is no joy in 'joy-riding'. It is theft of a car in exactly the same way as 'shoplifting' is theft from a shop...."; 2) classifications and chronologies; 3) the assumption that joyriders cannot be good drivers; 4) what might be called 'market research questions' and; 5) correctionalism. Each of these themes from the literature are discussed below.

Many of the studies concern themselves with whether car theft is like other theft or is joyriding an entry offence leading to other offences.<sup>1</sup> Middle class joyriders may never become burglars so the bald assertion that joyriding leads to burglary would be wrong. Clearly joyriding leads to all sorts of traffic offences and thefts from or using the car - ramraiding for instance. Taking a car just to get home and leaving it unharmed - possible when security was simpler or where drivers are careless - also seems unlikely to lead onto other crimes in itself.

Whilst most researchers remark on the versatility of offenders, particularly juvenile offenders, Farrington *et al* (1988) found in their study of 70,000 juvenile offenders in the States that vehicle theft was one of the three most specialist offences. Tarling (1994) also found some evidence of specialisation amongst car thieves as did Wilkinson and Morgan (1995). Light *et al* (1993) found 35% of their sample had burgled. Only one of Gibbens' (1958) Borstal lads had no other property offences and Cooper (1989) reported early involvement in burglary before car thieving. Briggs (1991) found amongst respondents to his questionnaire 28% also had offences against property and 7.5% against the person and 64.5% had solely car related offences but this included Road Traffic Act offences. Groombridge (1994) found of ten young men attending a motor project five mentioned either serious or persistent offending - "2 Robberies"; "30 various"; and two bodily harm convictions (actual and grievous). All these findings are inconclusive. What is interesting is the emphasis placed on it.

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1. In the way that soft drugs are seen to lead inevitably to the use of hard drugs.



Some of the confusion as to whether joyriders are specialists is caused by confusion as to what is to count as criminal. Motoring offences are often seen to be different from 'crime' but the literature is marked by disagreements as to what should count as a motoring offence (Kriefman (1975), Willett (1964 and 1973), Steer and Carr-Hill (1967) and Martin and Webster (1971). Willett (1964) does conclude that motor offenders have criminal characteristics. Car use may now be so widespread that simple use is not sufficient to distinguish between types. It is necessary to go beyond use to the meanings given to that use. Drug use in the time and the scheme of Cloward and Ohlin (1961) was seen as a sufficient indicator of difference from other delinquents to merit a 'retreatist' category of its own. Admitted drug use by young people now is such that non-use could be seen to be deviant (Gilman, 1997) .

Attempts to classify auto-thieves, car criminals or joyriding are a common feature of the studies. McGaghy *et al* (1976) set out a six-fold classification that Briggs (1991) also uses as a base. Webb and Laycock (1992) and Light *et al* (1993) refer to Clarke's (1991) sixfold classification of theft from, theft of for joyriding, theft for other crimes, immediate transport, longer term transport and insurance fraud. These and Jones (1993) all attempt to define car crime or joyriding in ways that mix legal categories (theft or taking without consent) and the presumed intentions of the taker (short-term fun, longer term pleasure or permanently for profit). It is broadly agreed that cars may be taken for joyriding - to be one of the boys or to enjoy the thrill of speed - and it is recognised that this may overlap with theft or lead to professional car theft. What it does not capture is the history and sociology involved in all these.

The history suggests that what constitutes joyriding itself has changed. It was once the preserve of the rich, joyriding in their own cars. Increased car ownership allied to poor security allowed the development of joyriding to get home. Joyriding is no longer a spectacular display of wealth but of daring. Its media image is very much that of the inner city auto-test. These issues are discussed further in respect of the driving capacity of joyriders.

Gulliver (1991) in his work with identified car thieves suggests that they might be categorised as 'professionals', 'marginals' and obsessionals. Light *et al* (1993) found evidence of 'specialists'. McCullough and Schmidt (1990) report that in West Belfast joyriders are keen to distinguish themselves from the 'hoods'. Tremblay *et al* (1994) distinguish between 'Jockeys' (theft of cars for profit - whole or broken down into parts) and Joyriders (theft of cars for fun).

Moving on from a classification of types of car thief we have examples of chronologies - where car thieves move smoothly through the classifications. Parker (1974a) speaks of a career as do Light *et al* (1993) - a short apprenticeship as a look-out followed by increased skill and daring in thefts and driving. The opportunity is missed for the pun 'journeyman' to describe the position in the guild of joyriders between apprentice and master. McCorry and Morrissey (1989) set out a specific chronology observed in Belfast:

Table 3.1 Chronology of car theft career adopted from McCorry and Morrissey (1989)

Age	Phase	Description
12-14	1	becoming a passenger in a stolen car
14-15	2	driving an already stolen car
14-16	3	steal a car
15-18	4	steal goods from the car they've stolen
15-18	5	steal cars to remove goods
18+	6	semi-professional car thief

Such chronologies suggest a conveyor-belt like progression from stage one to stage six. These stages certainly exist but some will enter at different points and not all will continue to become professional car thieves. Strictly such chronologies should perhaps start with being a passenger in a parent's or other adult's car. This may not lead to car theft but may well influence how cars are subsequently driven. The move to semi-professional status as either a car thief or stealer of goods from cars will depend on there being a market for stolen goods and access to that market. Tremblay *et al* (1994) show how changes in the market for stolen cars and parts can effect the balance between 'jockeys' and 'joyriders'. Parker (1974a) noted



how the 'Boys' were eventually pushed out of car radio theft by concerted police action.

The problem with both classifications and chronologies is that they freeze the joyrider into a certain type or stage which does not relate well to the reality of their situation. Thus Parker's 'Boys' never got into joyriding though the younger 'Lads' did. Briggs (1991) respondents would not necessarily decide whether to steal a car or its contents until the opportunity arose. It also tends to assume that car thieves are different from other criminals and certainly from non-criminals. This classificatory urge might be seen as positivistic and policy-driven.

The Home Office Working Group (1988) were:

..very concerned about the portrayal of driving by the media. All too often we see examples of bad driving behaviour in films and TV programmes - high speed chases etc. Furthermore cars are invariably advertised as a kind of fantasy object to be attained, with no positive message about the need for safe, responsible driving. (Para 40)

Much of the literature considers the driving ability of joyriders. The findings point in a number of different ways but this might be due to differences of view of what constitutes joyriding and what constitutes good driving. The base assumption is that joyriding is bad driving. This ignores the necessity for good - or adequate - driving if joyriding for short-term transportation is intended or if the attention of the police is not to be drawn to car theft for profit. Support for this can be found in Gibbens (1957).<sup>2</sup> Parker (1974a:47) was of the opinion that two 'Lads' "Chalkie and Tiddler are now fairly safe drivers, with gear changes and improved cornering as part of their repertoire."

Briggs (1991) joyriders certainly reckoned themselves: only 5% rated their driving as average or below, 80% as good or very good and 15% exceptional. Many were so confident that 56% reckoned to be better than the police. Similarly Spencer (1992) found among her joyriders that they were quick to describe other twockers as "maniacs" - possibly said with some admiration? - but they described themselves as "bloody brilliant". Two had taunted police and

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2. In uncited reports of Swedish criminologists.



got away with it, bolstering their opinion of their driving skills. Briggs is very clear that the quite proper caution of the police in chases leads the joyrider to believe that they beat the police - and the police(man) to believe they have been beaten?

Only 13% of Briggs questionnaire respondents had read the Highway Code. Knowledge about cars was not necessarily better, for instance, Gow and Peggrem (1991) found two thirds of their respondents overestimated the top speeds of cars - too literal a reading of speedos or of the promise of advertising? - and 56% had no knowledge of braking/stopping distances and 95% did not know how many people died in road accidents or as a result of car thefts<sup>3</sup>. These findings and a consideration of the innate difficulties of driving and the growing difficulties posed by traffic suggest that these young men cannot be good drivers. However, it has to be considered how well members of the general public would do in tests of their driving skills or knowledge <sup>4</sup>. Particularly how well would young men - the nearest matching group - who drive their own or parents cars do? Concern for the driving of young people more generally has now increased and research conducted into some of the differences between 'safe' and 'unsafe' young male drivers (AA, 1992). Finn and Bragg (1986 ) found that the majority of individuals consider they are less likely to have an accident than there peers, possibly because they thought themselves more skilful. Mathews and Moran(1986) found that vehicle-handling skills, reflexes and judgement were all the subject of over-confidence; young drivers were particularly confident.

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3. This figure is not known but Briggs (1991) and the Home Office (1988) quote a figure of 200 times greater likelihood of a stolen car be involved in an accident. This stems from American work which reported a 49-200 times greater likelihood (Weglian,1978). Whether this figure can be taken out of the American context and applied to Britain's roads and different car culture is moot. Moreover the crude figures show that deaths and injury on the road have been reducing year on year despite the increase in the numbers of cars on the road and those stolen. Falling from 5,501 road deaths in 1989 (Central Statistical Office 1991) to 3,598 for 1996 (The Independent 6 June 1997).

4. Sales figures for the Highway Code suggest that only those about to take their test read it. Moreover, presentations of this material to a variety of audiences suggests that a threat to test them on safe stopping distances would have been unwelcome. Shortest stopping distance at 20 mph is 12 metres and 96 metres at 70 mph.

Hutchings (1996) relates 'aggressive driving practices and road rage' (she makes the distinction) to masculine identity and found from her interviews with Police Drivers, Advanced Drivers, Other drivers and Convicted Offenders differing attitudes towards driving from 'roadcraft' to self expression which form part of a 'masculine car culture'.

Interestingly Hood (1972:61) found that half the Magistrates he studied rated their driving as "better than average," yet 60% had had an accident in their driving life (average 25 years) and one third had a driving conviction. McKenna *et al* (1991) found that, on a 0-10 scale of 20 aspects of driving, men rated themselves at 7.08 but the 'average driver' at 5.22, whereas women rated themselves at 6.52 against the average drivers 5.10. In the light of such findings it would seem that joyriders share a lot with other drivers.

As explained earlier it is not intended to review the purely situational crime prevention literature but many of the studies reviewed do dwell on which car is the most popular to steal, whether evening or morning is the best time, whether car parks or roadside are the best places to take from whether a scaffold bar or 'jiggling' (using a key or possibly a screwdriver in the lock) is better to get in and start a car. And finally, 'why do you do it?' These questions can be seen as being related to the policy-orientation and correctionalism of much of the literature on joyriding. Houghton's Theft Index (1992) sets out the relative likelihood of various makes and models of car being stolen. It is intended to influence consumers towards buying more secure cars and therefore through market forces to influence manufacturers to make more secure cars. However, the raw figures for theft (Houghton corrects for these) are as much a measure of consumer popularity as car sales.

There is sometimes disagreement in the literature as to whether Fords or Vauxhalls are the most attractive cars to steal but most agree that Ladas and Skodas are worst unless they have a good stereo. Rover cars usually rate little mention but fieldwork in Oxford showed a strong following for this locally produced car. The publication of the Car Theft Index should end some of these arguments as far as straight theft goes. Similarly there is disagreement about where it



is best to take cars from. Light *et al* (1993) found car parks most popular at 37% against curbside 6%. Briggs (1991) and Gow and Peggrem (1991) agree that car parks are most popular at 53% and 66% respectively whereas Gulliver (1991) and McCullough and Schmidt (1990) found the roadside more popular. Light *et al* (1993) point out that 28% of their respondents took cars from anywhere and 18% from 'somewhere quiet'. This suggests that cars are taken from where they are found and that may differ over time and between regions responding to both intended and unintended changes in opportunities.

Aimed at the target-hardening policy maker other questions examine how entry is effected or cars started. More skilful and less damaging means of entry are learnt with age and experience but the purpose of entry can effect method too. A smashed window attracts attention if the car is to be used for joyriding but speed not neatness of entry is a greater consideration in theft of the stereo so more damage may result.

All the known UK research has been policy-orientated. Briggs (1991) was a social worker, Gulliver (1991) and Harraway (1986) work for Probation Services, Cooper (1989), Light *et al* (1993) and Spencer (1992) were all commissioned by the Home Office, Gow and Peggrem (1991) and McCullough and Schmidt (1990) all did their research for voluntary organisations providing 'alternatives to custody' or community penalties. It is not known who Gibbens (1958) was researching for but from the cooperation he received and the positivism of the Mannheim and Wilkins prediction scores he uses all indicate the intention to be policy useful. His chairmanship of the Institute for the Study and Treatment of Offenders (1972-1981) may suggest treatment or welfare rather than punishment. However, following Foucault (1977) and Cohen (1985), similar 'disciplinary' or social control intentions or effects might be assumed for both punishment and welfare to enable both to be subsumed here as 'correctionalist'.<sup>5</sup>

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5. This is not the place to rerun the arguments between Foucault and 'whig' versions of penal history which either favour the purity of the progressive idea of reform or its good intention but ultimate failure. Vass (1990) gives a short summary of the debate and a defence of the possibility of 'alternatives' whilst Howe (1994) offers a post-modern feminist critique of the whole debate.



This is not to suggest a conspiracy but to make the point that such research needs to be 'useful' if it is to be sanctioned and published. The concentration of work in the late 1980s and early 1990s is indicative of the real problem that joyriding posed authority, chose to see as posing a problem or was forced by media pressure to acknowledge as a problem. Despite the official tone, glimpses of the critical occasionally surface; these are discussed in the section on the gaps in the literature below.

Given the official nature of these reports it is not surprising that prevention and deterrence are to the fore. The market research questions are directed at informing crime prevention - particularly primary (Brantingham and Faust, 1976) or situational (Heal and Laycock, 1986) measures. Particularly correctionalist are the questions on the effectiveness of criminal justice measures.

Since much of the literature on motor projects is produced by supporters there is considerable common ground between them. Only Jones (1993) seeks to question some of the suppositions. There is less common ground in literature on masculinities discussed. Where some would take male gender to be indivisible from biological sex others see it as closely tied to appropriate sex role socialisation and others still (particularly those to be discussed in Chapter 7) see masculinities as being constructed and constructing. The sex role model has been hegemonic within criminology, if the issue has been addressed at all.

#### The gaps revealed (joyriding, motor projects and masculinities)

It should be clear from Chapter 2 and the discussion above that important social factors, the very stuff of sociological investigation, are missing. These missing factors are class, race, gender and culture. In comparison Parker (1974a) may say very little directly about car crime yet his ethnographic methods locate and give a context to the 'Boys' deviance that adds more to our knowledge than questions on where cars are most likely to be stolen from. Class, 'race', gender and culture are discussed below.

Newspaper and magazine coverage of early motoring referred to in the histories of the car (Flower & Jones, 1981 and Pettifer and Turner, 1984) and the Metropolitan Commissioner's Reports are revealing on the issues of class. The cost of motoring ensured only the wealthy could own cars. Complaints about noise, dust and poor driving were common. Webb & Laycock (1992) mention that the car was a luxury item affordable by only the wealthy who raced around the roads and became a nuisance - shades of Toad. The motorists in turn blamed the state of the roads, pedestrians and chauffeurs.

The organised voices of motoring and motorists, the Royal Automobile Club (RAC) and Automobile Association (AA), were stuffed with Establishment figures. The AA's early history is that of seeking to frustrate the attempts of the police to control speeding motorists on the London to Brighton road. It did this by organising parties of scouts to warn of the presence of officers with stopwatches on measured stretches of road. Occasional attempts by the Home Office to stop what it saw as akin to aiding and abetting burglars ended when most of the Law Officers were found to be members.<sup>6</sup>

The 'favoured group' theses of the early British (Gibbens, 1958) and American researchers (Wattenberg and Balistreri, 1952) are not fully fledged class studies, though their implicit treatment of class makes for a more rounded analysis than the later British 'correctionalist' studies (Cooper, 1989; Light *et al*, 1993 and Spencer, 1992). The high point of the favoured group thesis is, perhaps, most strongly exemplified by Wattenberg and Balistreri (1952) and even as late as 1977 as Gibbons summarises the literature and his own research to conclude that joyriders are more middle class than other criminals.

Of later studies Light *et al* (1993) explicitly recognize that their methodology picked up only lower class car thieves. Their published work makes no mention of middle class involvement

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6. See Plowden (1971) and Brendon (1997) for more details. The AA soon moved to become more recognisably like its modern incarnation but anecdote has it that the patrolman's salute to members was used - until its abolition - to signal the presence of the police by a pointed failure to salute.



but their respondents knew of uncaught middle class youth who liked to hang about with joyriders for 'street cred'.<sup>7</sup> Other studies take their samples from inner city areas or from convicted populations so cannot avoid a bias towards the working class. A question that needs to be asked is whether the class of joyriders has changed, is an artefact of the methods chosen or if joyriding itself has changed and moved down market like other pastimes. It is, of course, provocative to call joyriding a pastime but it is possible to see joyriding as a dangerous street sport - another motorsport discipline - but with a democratic ruling body of one's peers.

Information gleaned during fieldwork suggests young black men were involved in 'displaying' on Blackbird Leys, yet despite the media's normal treatment of black people and crime there was nothing made of it. There were no 'black joyrider runs down blond-haired girl' headlines like the 'black mugger' headlines of the early 70s (Hall *et al*, 1978). Where available, figures suggest (Procter and Townsend, 1994) and observation suggests that young black men do not attend motor projects. If true, there might be a number of reasons this might be: first that this represents a real lower involvement of black men in joyriding or second, and not incompatible with the first reason, that if involved they are sent to custody or receive other community penalties. Graham and Bowling (1995) found - though not statistically significant - a cumulative male self-reported participation in car theft as follows: White (4%); Black (1%); Indian (2%); Pakistani (8%); and Bangladeshi (3%).

Reasons for lower involvement might be: first a different relationship to the car amongst young Afro-Caribbean men, that is they may be keen on cars but not for the short-term gratification offered by joyriding or displaying. That is it may not be 'cool' or 'phat' (hot) to joyride. When the police stop you it is important to be the owner of the car and have all the documentation in order. It enables you to maintain a 'cool pose' (Clatterbaugh, 1990).

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7. Personal communication with Roy Light.



Moreover, like new clothes the car is to be seen, to be appreciated by your friends.<sup>8</sup> You cannot cruise the block if the police are chasing you. 'Respect' is earned not by short-term flashy display of a car but the long-term use of a car. Joyriding may not be a way of doing masculinity but a way of doing white masculinity. Back (1994) notes how young white men adopt music and clothes come from black styles. The reverse does not appear to operate in respect of cars. Moreover, Graham and Bowling's (1995) findings on different patterns of drug use between different groups indicate different attitudes to drugs. For instance, 12% of white males reported amphetamine ('speed') use at some time against less than 1% for blacks. Other figures for drug use and crime more generally show equivalent overall offending rates so these differences in patterns of offending suggest different attitudes to the practical and symbolic components of crime.

Whilst in no way conclusive, the contention that young black men may have a different relationship to the car is supported by the lyrics of 'rap' songs like DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince's 'Summertime'. Several verses make passing reference to cruising in, or looking after, cars. One verse combines all these themes.

Chillin' in a car they spent all day waxin'  
 Lean to the side  
 But you can't speed through  
 Two miles an hour  
 So everyone can see you  
 (1991, A Taylor/C Smith/ R Bell/Hula/K Fingers/W Smith Zomba Productions)

Alternatively young black men may have an equal propensity and opportunity to take cars but do not do so for fear of discriminatory policing catching them at a greater rate than white colleagues. Carl Josephs a young black man has been stopped 34 times in his car in the last two years (The Observer, 8 June 1997). According to the second Islington Crime Survey (Crawford *et al*) both Middle Aged White Men (23%) and Women (17%) have high levels of police stops but Young Middle Class White Women (26%), Young Working Class Black men

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8. Bayley (1986) notes that "cars were a form of display" (p1) that "The cars provided the costumes." (p2) and "For some people, owning a new car is the nearest they will ever get to perfection in an otherwise flawed and soiled life." (p4)

(21%) and Women (22%) also have high levels too, all twice the rates for Young Working Class White Men (9%) and Women (10%). Whilst some of these rates are similar the underlying construction of them may be different. The white middle class stops may be for traffic offences but the black ones on suspicion of other offences. Reasons for higher custody or other community penalties might be that they are not referred to projects, or if referred not accepted or given a custodial sentence irrespective. This would imply discriminatory practices by probation officers, youth justice workers, project workers and sentencers.

Work in California (Schwendinger and Schwendinger, 1985) suggests that young Hispanic Men in gangs have a different relation to the car. Instead of the speed and immediate excitement they prefer a Lo-rider; a car deliberately lowered to hug the ground which is chromed and tricked out with lush fittings. It is driven very slowly round the neighbourhood to flaunt ownership and style. They could not be driven at speed whilst in the lowered position and would not be. The point is to impress your friends and irritate your enemies by driving around very slowly with the window down. Non-hispanic groups prefer to customize cars by raising the back-end and emphasising speed through coachlines and flame graphics that suggest the dragster or the hot-rod.

Only the American studies mention race though the smaller studies by the probation service in this country routinely monitor race. Neither address the issue. The American studies mention race to disprove the 'favoured status' hypothesis and the probation studies mention but do not dwell on race as an issue. Thus Davies (1993) mentions that 4.2% of West Midlands Probation Service women motor offending clients were black as were thirteen percent of male motor offenders. There is no discussion of what this means. Is this low or high for the area? Moreover as Davies examines both motoring offences and motor theft offences together it is not possible consistently to pull out the full facts for car taking. The numbers for the combined totals are such that the numbers of black joyriders would be too small for useful statistical treatment. It is however important to consider the issue of black involvement in car taking.



The question then is do young black men joyride? Full ethnic monitoring of the Criminal Justice System will, in due course, reveal the extent to which there is differential involvement in - or policing of - car crime. This would still leave unresolved the question of joyriding given the difficulties of defining it set out in Chapter 1. Even, if a greater or lesser involvement in car crime could be shown it would still not indicate whether young black men took cars for the same reasons as young white men.

Some facts are known about black car use, for instance of Afro-Caribbean women only 10% use cars as the driver and 45% as a passenger. The figures for Asian women are higher on both 22% as drivers and 64% as passengers (GLC 1984 and 1987). The stereotype of the young black man, and sometimes the fantasy of those young black men, places him behind his shades, behind the wheel of a BMW (Black Man's Wheels).<sup>9</sup> Whatever the reason for joyriding - drift, status frustration, sub-culture, unemployment or class warfare - these will be shared by many young men and women. Theoretically then, young black men should be as involved in joyriding as young white men. Even with official statistics it would be difficult to be sure but the absence of media finger-pointing, anecdotal evidence, the findings of McGaghy *et al* (1977) and monitoring by and observation at motor projects raises the possibility that joyriding is largely a white phenomena. Hudson (1988:35) referring to breaking and entering and to taking and driving away a car says "It may be that for some white male youth at least, delinquency is partly powered by a sexuality-focused and societally stimulated dynamic."

Feminism rightly raised the issue of how women were ignored or badly treated by theory, policy, practice and research. One response to that has been to take women seriously but increasingly to recognize that men too have a gender (see discussion in Chapter 2 and 7).

The literature on joyriding and motor projects like much criminology has not yet incorporated such developments.

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9. It is not clear whether this is a racist usage or an ironic appropriation by those young men, taking and driving away the initials but not the product. In another context the initials stood for Baader-Meinhof Wagen, as this left-wing terrorist group favoured these vehicles in undertaking their terminal critique of the bourgeois society that produced them. The proper meaning of the initials is Bayerische Motorenwerke.



Where masculinity is mentioned in the studies the problem is seen to be in traversing adolescence rather than any doubts about what it means to be a man. Both Briggs (1991) and Light *et al* (1993) found young women who joyride. Their respondents said they knew girls who did joyride but got away with it because the police did not stop them. An alternative explanation would be that they drove better. However, the recorded figures show that of all crimes, car crime is a crime of young men. Most studies mention this but only in passing. A self-report study shows a sex ratio of 5.9:1 for car theft (and 13.6:1 for motorbike theft) (Graham and Bowling, 1995:111 ).

The implicit suggestion is that the problem is not masculinity itself but the transition to an unproblematised masculinity. Briggs observation was that joyriders were 'wimps'.<sup>10</sup> This might be a value judgement on their masculinity but it is true that joyriding offers opportunities not to appear to be a 'wimp' in that it requires nerve and skill and can confer status. However - and this would be attractive to a 'wimp' - joyriding requires little strength and rarely brings direct confrontation with a victim as burglary can and robbery does. Fieldwork observation suggests that some who attend Motor Projects could be seen as 'wimps' but by no means all. Closer observation and operationalisation of the concept would be required to take this further.

It is not true that criminology has totally ignored gender but as Naffine (1987) notes of its treatment of women it has reflected the views of the time. Thus Cohen (1955:164) is explicit about absolute gender differences in *Delinquent Boys*:

Because of the structure of the modern family and the nature of our occupational system, children of both sexes tend to form early feminine identifications. The boy, however, unlike the girl, comes later under strong social pressure to establish his masculinity, his *difference from* female figures. Because his mother is the object of the feminine identification which he feels is a threat to his status as a male, he tends to react negativistically to those conduct norms which have been associated with mother and therefore have acquired feminine significance. Since mother has been the principal agent of indoctrination of 'good' respectable behaviour, 'goodness' comes to symbolize femininity and engaging in 'bad' behaviour acquires the function of denying his femininity and therefore asserting his masculinity. This is the motivation to juvenile delinquency. (Emphasis in original.)

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10. Personal communication

It is, perhaps, this sort of thinking that leads for calls for a campaign to depict joyriding as “unmanly” (Cooper 1989) or the Home Office Working Group (1988) which recommended (Para 44 (b) “the use of a popular figure to whom young people can relate, to get across the message that car crime is not ‘macho’ or fashionable.”. However, the Home Office (1993b) claims that its depiction of car criminals as hyenas was successful, yet the outsider, the outlaw, is an archetype of male identity. Labelling perspectives too would suggest that this outsider status which might lead to deviancy amplification.

Both Cooper (1989) and the Home Office Working Group (1988) recognize the power of advertising and cultural images of the cars desirability that would make their suggestions difficult to implement but fail to understand the deeper location of notions of masculinity in society. Moreover, to suggest that a hero might work is to use a patriarchal logic - a ‘good’ father, rather than a ‘big brother’ for these ‘bad boys’.

Jefferson (1992) and Jackson (1992) adopt a more complex position on car crime, criminology and masculinity. Jackson (1992:18) says, “..joyriders bind themselves into emotional and social prisons through their struggles to build identities that they can walk tall in.” Social deprivation and heterosexual masculinity are the relevant context for building those identities.

Amongst other things Jackson considers whether young male joyriders seeking a police chase would do so if police drivers were women. This is close to putting a civilising duty on women and ignores the practical difficulty of knowing, from a distance and at speed, the gender of another driver. The civilising influence of women is not explicit in studies of car crime but ‘growing up’ and increased responsibilities are often cited as reasons for giving up joyriding. Women are often seen to be behind this.

‘Impressing women/girls’ scores low as a reason for joyriding. It is not mentioned by Light *et al* (1993) respondents as a reason for starting or continuing with car crime; neither do Spencer’s (1992) or Cooper’s (1989). Only 7% of Briggs’ (1991) sample said they stole cars to impress



girls whereas 21% said to impress my friends. Perhaps these young men know young women like Karen who told Foster (1990):

I think most of the boys his age, who live round my area, the ones that I know, have all been in trouble with *TDA and silly things* (emphasis added) like that. I mean Terry's always been very easily led: if someone says 'Oh come and do this, come on, do that' he'll do it.

More generally, Jefferson (1992) notes that joyriding, ramraiding and hotrodding are all sexualised terms. Much advertising continues to use sexual imagery to sell cars. Most cars are advertised to men or to families. It must be assumed that what sells cars also makes them attractive to thieves. Both manliness and advertising will be examined in Chapter 8.

It is not argued here (though see Chapter 1 and 8) but it is contended that Britain does have a car culture. It is not complete and it is contested - for instance, note the direct action against road building at Twyford Down, the M11 extension and the Newbury By-Pass. In the literature the car is often explicitly recognised as a prime consumer good and cultural icon but this recognition is not followed up. Conversely books on the history cars - celebrations of car culture - rarely have much to say about crime (Pettifer and Turner, 1984; Marsh and Collett, 1986).

Thus Briggs (1991:49) notes "Motor cars are an omnipresent, inescapable feature of contemporary life..." and the Home Office Working Group concurs (1988:Para 40), "We recognize that there is a powerful 'car culture' in our society whereby the car is a symbol of status and power which is particularly attractive to young people." and again Webb and Laycock (1992):

The car has become a central and dominating feature of life, with much of the environment being designed to accommodate it. More and better roads had to be built, fuel had to be easily available, house design had to include garaging or off-street parking, and town and city centres had to planned to cope with traffic and parking requirements.

Yet the concept of a car culture is never followed up in the literature. Observations are



routinely made about car culture in introductions or as asides before returning to the categorisation of offenders and potential ways to stop them. If the concept of a car culture is to be taken seriously then studies of car crime should start with the car. Car culture, whilst strongly influenced by America, will be different in Britain and, possibly, different in various parts of Britain - Belfast, Oxford and Newcastle all show differences in patterns of joyriding (McCorry and Morrissey, 1989; McCullough and Schmidt, 1990; Campbell, 1993). The lower driving age in the United States and the wider ownership of cars suggests that some of the reasons given for offending by joyriders in this country may not be applicable in the States. The corollary of this would be that the rate of joyriding for pleasure should be lower and theft for long-term transportation or profit higher than in Britain. This would be difficult to test since the ratio in neither country is known precisely.

#### A set of propositions to fill the gaps

The policies that might arise from a fully contextualised view of joyriding would need to link up attempts to control joyriding with attempts to control dangerous or drunken driving. Those efforts need to connect to road safety issues more generally from traffic calming to increased public transport. Less driving of any sort is required. Other questions that might be asked, not necessarily of joyriders, are set out below. They invert, enlarge or subvert the themes set out above.

What is it that prevents young women from stealing cars? This inverts the assumption that criminology is about explaining male deviant action not female compliance?

Do young black men steal cars less? What does this say about the stereotype of black involvement in street crime or the policing of black motorists?

Is it only young white working class men who get caught joyriding? Do women or the middle classes get away with it?

Does joyriding say something about car culture - do the changes over time and the variations between regions indicate something about society's relation to the car? Are more cars 'torched' now and is this to remove fingerprints or evidence that like most take-aways cars are to be thrown away once consumed? Is joyriding a sport whose popularity might wane in the face of a new fashion?

Any classification or chronology needs to be more sophisticated and take into account connections with legal driving and motoring offences.

As the social conditions often associated with crime are shared by detected criminals and specialist joyriders alike is it not legitimate to ask if joyriding prevents some becoming involved with other crime rather than escalating into more serious crime?

How can less, and better driving, by all be encouraged? What constitutes good driving? How can the attractiveness of the car be reduced not how secure can the car be made? This inverts the situational prevention logic of most studies.

If the effectiveness of motor projects is to be measured what might be considered to constitute success, desistance or harm reduction, a problematised view of masculinity or acceptance of local or class norms? Are these aims best served using cars - banger racing or car mechanics - or not. Motor projects are environmentally unsound but so are Grand Prix racing and petrol-driven lawn mowers. What effective work can be done in prisons if the punitive atmosphere heralded by the Aggravated Vehicle Taking Act and the 'prison works' philosophy of Michael Howard (only partially disavowed by Jack Straw) holds sway?

The scope of the research (ie which gaps are to be filled)

Just addressing a few of the questions above would warrant a study in its own right. Some would offer methodological problems and ethical difficulties. Participant observation of

joyriding and the associated culture of the young white men and the locality in which they live would be difficult - though not impossible - but may not be able to touch on the issues of class and 'race'. Finding groups of upper class or black or female 'joyriders' might take a very long time. Observation of the operation of motor projects for joyriders is more easily managed but may reveal little about joyriders and the practice of joyriding. Moreover, it may reproduce some of the deficiencies of the studies discussed above.

Whilst it is clear that there are empirical gaps in our knowledge the gaps have as much to do with theoretical issues than the failure to carry out sufficient empirical studies. The major theoretical problems with the extant studies are the failure to theorize the car, its relation to society and its intersection with issues of class, 'race', gender and sexuality. Given the overwhelming over-representation of young men amongst those criminalised for joyriding and the continued over representation of men amongst motoring offenders and as customers for the products and accessories of car culture a major issue is masculinity. However, the starting point for this discussion - joyriding - should not be abandoned as this too relates to both car culture and to masculinities so is discussed in Chapter 5. Motor projects are seen by many as an answer to joyriding but without recognising what this may say about masculinities and car culture so this is discussed in Chapter 6. Given the significance of theories of masculinity to this study the whole of Chapter 7 is given over to this issue. In Chapter 8 joyriding, motor projects and masculinity are combined and placed within an environmental - green- perspective. The extent to which the specific gaps identified above are filled is small but a map now exists on which the areas of masculinity (including research into masculinity, see Chapter 4) and car culture are better defined so that empirical explorers will not be detained as I have by them. Some empirically-based, policy-directed - but not necessarily readily-useful - conclusions are offered in Chapter 8.



## CHAPTER 4 THE METHOD

The early work of Jock Young illustrates some of the issues raised by examining joyriding, as he says:

It is necessary, in order to explain the phenomena of drugtaking, to relate it to factors existing in the wider society [...]The *meaning* of drugtaking has to be sought in the context of the group's values and world view.[...]Drugtaking is almost ubiquitous in our society - the totally temperate individual is statistically the deviant. (1997:71)

However, the absences in the work reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 and the desire to advance a gender and environmentally aware criminology would require the quote to be rewritten - in respect of joyriding - as follows: it is necessary, in order to explain the phenomena of joyriding, to relate it to factors existing in the wider society. The meaning of joyriding has to be sought in the context of the groups values and world view. Driving is almost ubiquitous in our society - the non-driver is statistically the deviant.

The factors in society of which the quotes speak are many. This thesis concentrates on gender and car culture in explaining the phenomena of joyriding. Whereas Young sought to find the differing meanings of drugtaking for his Notting Hill respondents/observees - as distinct from 'merchant seamen, Puerto Ricans and doctors' (1997:71) - this thesis connects - but notes differences between - young men who take cars for dangerously pleasurable drives with men who drive their own cars ostensibly for business or convenience.

Given the near ubiquity of driving the 'group' is taken to be larger and less specific than Young has in mind though as we shall see small identifiable groups were observed as part of the method. Whereas Young was writing of what could be called a subculture of drugtaking the argument that joyriders are subculture of the wider car culture is not presented here. Nothing in the literature or fieldwork suggests any sub-cultural affiliation between joyriders. It may briefly have been a fashion but the relationship may be better described not as hierarchic one of culture/subculture but as a flatter one whereby joyriders and motor-racing enthusiasts,

vintage car owners, customisers, 'Sunday Drivers' and, even, 'careful lady drivers can be seen as tribes or clans of the Great Car Economy. Hence the slippage from joyriding to 'driving' in the reworked quote.

Given his subject, circumstances and the temper of the times Young chose participant observation as his method. This can be seen as part of the revolt against quantitative methods. Earlier, and many current, attempts to explore drugtaking in the correctionalist and positivist tradition have sought their explanations in quantifiable factors in the individual, group, area or society. Similar methods for studying joyriding were examined critically in Chapter 3. Some of which is discussed below with additional material setting out some arguments within qualitative methods. Given the significance placed on masculinities in this thesis some time is also given over to feminist contributions to the debate.

Where Fielding sees ethnography as "a form of qualitative research' (1993:154) Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) usefully discuss 'what is ethnography'. They do so in terms which they intend to "steer a course between an abstract, methodological treatise and a practical 'cookbook' (1983:x). They seek to go beyond a dispute between research methods informed by what they call positivism and naturalism to concentrate on reflexivity; a reflexivity that relies neither on positivist nor naturalist empiricism. They declare, "all social research takes the form of participant observation: it involves participating in the social world, and reflecting on the products of that participation." (1983:16).

For Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) positivism is the use of a 'neutral observation language' to develop 'universal laws' using the logic and methods of science such as the experiment (in which variables can be directly manipulated) or the survey (in which variables can be manipulated statistically). This enables results to be tested or falsified. They draw attention to positivism's long history and its connections with philosophy, in the form of 'logical positivism'. For the purposes of this research the connection must also be drawn between positivism and American sociology and sociological criminology as well as the long shadow of Lombroso.

Criminology is frequently asserted to have begun with Lombroso and his search for the innate characteristics of individuals that caused crime. Garland (1994) gives the 'Lombrosian project' equal weight to the 'governmental project' in the formation of modern criminology. Cohen (1981) charts its continued importance to conventional, mainstream criminology. The 'government project' continues today as 'new administrative criminology' (Young, 1994). Both the 'Lombrosian project' and the 'Government project' rely on empiricism. As Young says:

There are, of course, and always have been, criminologists who believe they are merely adding to the stock of knowledge, free from ideological preconceptions. These are inevitably those most trapped within a paradigm - usually the positivist. The great Anglo-Saxon tradition of empiricism is a form of theoretical blindness: the parading of a hidden agenda of atomistic caricatures of human nature and simplistic notions of social order. (1994:70)

From a feminist perspective Naffine has this to say:

Criminologists of the empirical sort are, therefore, committed to a traditional ideal of objectivity. When they study an object, they must strive to get themselves out of the field of vision, out of the line of enquiry - and they believe it is feasible to do this. (1997:22)

More radically opposed to the possibility of an agreed scientific method is Feyerabend (1988). His anarchistic relativism insists that, "Science is an essentially anarchic enterprise: theoretical anarchism is more humanitarian and more likely to encourage progress than its law-and-order alternatives.", that, "We may advance science by proceeding counterinductively." and

Hypotheses contradicting well-confirmed theories give us evidence that cannot be obtained in any other way. Proliferation of theories is beneficial for science, while uniformity impairs its critical power. Uniformity also endangers the free development of the individual." (1988:5)

Here he challenges not only the Viennese positivism of his former mentor, Popper, but also the scientific claims of fellow anarchist, Kropotkin. For Feyerabend, "Scientists are sculptors of reality...they create the semantic conditions leading to strong inferences from known effects to new and surprising projections." (1988:270). Similarly ethnographers shape their accounts in ways that are amenable to literary criticism (Atkinson, 1990) so scientists conjure up an appropriate ontology.



Opposed to positivism is naturalism which, according to Matza, has a commitment, "to phenomena and their nature; not to Science or any other system of standards" (1964:3). Matza was then seeking to deny the claims of science to be naturalistic and its positivistic insistence on the scientific method, insisting that naturalism, "cannot commit itself to any single preferred method for engaging and scrutinising phenomena" (1964:5). He rails against 'primitive social scientists' who take 'man' as the object of study rather than its subject. The taking of 'man' as the object of enquiry in criminology is frequently associated with, what Matza calls, 'correctionalism' which insists on causal explanations of crime, for whom a "concern with the nuances and character of the phenomena itself seemed idle, literary or romantic" (1964:87) .

For Hammersley and Atkinson the extreme position of naturalism is the demand that ethnographers " 'surrender' themselves to the cultures they wish to study" (1983:14) as a way of eliminating the effects of researcher bias by direct unmediated experience of the social world. Though Goffman notes that he did not sleep on the wards and "I did not allow myself to be committed even nominally" (1968:7). Hammersley and Atkinson offer their own remedy in the form of 'reflexivity'. They are seeking to persuade ethnography away from naturalist empiricism and positivism away from its reliance on empiricism towards a reflexivity that straddles both traditions. They contend that it is an "existential fact" (1983:15) that "we are part of the social world we study" (1983:14) so common-sense knowledge is not rejected but interrogated and the possibility of researcher effect on social effects welcomed as potentially informative; as "all social research, and indeed all social life, is founded upon participant observation" (1983:234-235) but as Downes and Rock note criminology itself is an eclectic, practical discipline where, " 'Reflexive' theory which urges the theorist to study himself as he theorizes is held to be especially burdensome." (1988:212). Yet what is proposed in this thesis is reflexivity. This is in line with Naffine's question: "what has gone wrong with the discipline of criminology that it should remain so reluctant to reflect critically upon its own worldview." (1997:9) She goes on to identify Ian Taylor and Vincenzo Ruggiero as opponents of "the present dominance of an atheoretical and unreflective scientific approach in

criminology" (1997:28) and goes on to say:

What we are observing is the reign of an often unreflective science of criminology, which neither examines its own particular ideologies (its own specific world view) nor speculates about the consequent intellectual and ethical value of the criminological enterprise (why it is doing what it is doing). We see, instead, a pre-occupation with the scientific study of of criminal man... But the gaze is unidirectional. Criminology examines criminal man but does not look back at himself to discover the nature of its own identity and how it shapes the very nature of the scientific process, including the very identity of criminal man himself. (1997:28-29)

Reflexivity and sensitivity to research subjects are typically associated with feminist research to the extent that opponents might call 'subjective' or 'emotional'. This requires a feminist critique of methods in general and of ethnography in particular. If there is an "epistemological brawl" (Pawson and Tilley, 1994:291) then it is between feminists such as Ramazanoglu (1992) and 'methodologists' such as Hammersley (1994). Since research methods are designed to gain knowledge about a research problem epistemological questions cannot be avoided.

For Ramazanoglu the purpose of feminist research is "the transformation of gender relations" (1992:207) which requires the empowerment of women. For her current methods, marked by 'male reason', actively work against the political project of feminism so distinctive methods need to be developed upon different epistemological ground. Smart (1990) usefully sets out how feminism has responded to the modernist, positivistic theories and methods of criminology, she in turn draws on Harding (1987). These responses are feminist empiricism, standpoint feminism and feminist post-modernism.

Feminist empiricism accepts the need for objective empirical research but points out the androcentric bias produced within a male-based academy. That bias includes the implicit and explicit sexism of the wider society reproduced within the research questions posed and the answers proposed. Therefore within criminology the work of Carlen (1988), Eaton (1986) and Mooney (1993) are examples. Empirical but motivated by a concern for women Harding sees the radical potential of such studies in putting wife abuse on the agenda. However, Smart



argues that it also presents little threat to established criminology, "men can go on studying men and the relevances of men as long as they acknowledge that it is men and not humanity they are addressing" (1990:78). The evidence of the contributions to the first edition of the compendious *Oxford Handbook of Criminology* suggests that little acknowledgement is even given to this empirical 'fact'.

Smart points out, too, a distinction which can be drawn between empiricism as an epistemological stance and empirical method. As feminists they moved away from the empiricism of positivist studies of 'offenders' towards the empiricism of ethnography with gendered, but usually women offenders or victims. This led to the many attempts to prove discrimination in the criminal justice system which necessarily take men as the norm from which women or the treatment of women deviate and fails to question the neutrality of the law itself.

Empirical work may reveal the experience of women as offender or victim but standpoint feminism places that experience at the centre of its concern and argues that a specifically feminist knowledge can be based upon this epistemological base. As Smart (1990:80) puts it:

...not just any experience is deemed to be equally valuable or valid. *Feminist* experience is achieved through a struggle against oppression; it is, therefore, argued to be more complete and less distorted than the perspective of the ruling group of men. A feminist standpoint then is not just the experience of women, but of women *reflexively* engaged in struggle (intellectual and political). ...This stance does not divide knowledge from values and politics but sees knowledge arising from engagement.

It is this fusion that upsets Hammersley (1994) where Ramanazoglu states, "knowledge is intrinsically political" (1992:210). Hammersley states equally clearly in opposition the purity of the research project which is "to produce knowledge, not to transform the world, or to achieve any other practical result" (1994:293). Smart argues that standpoint feminism has had little influence in feminist criminology, and therefore in criminology, but that the action research of feminists into rape and male violence has allowed problems with no name to acquire them. Where it has been influential in criminology is in left realism which she accuses of 'resort' to



women's experience of crime as 'justification'. She also claims that feminists within realism are not wholly aligned with left realism because of their political reluctance to turn their attention to masculinities. She is not explicit on this point but implicitly she argues that left realism ought to tackle gender issues but has given over the task to radical feminism or simply incorporated the insights on feminism on these issues thereby ignoring the 'reality' of men's genderedness.

Young's (1992) elucidation of the ten points of realism deploys references to the concerns of the women's movement and to the research of feminists and is clear on the specificity of social context. This makes the relative deprivation of "boys on the Lower East Side of Manhattan" and "girls in Florence" (1992:38) different yet there is no sense that gender itself forms a theorised part of the nature of crime, that is its form, social context, time trajectory and spatial dimension. A corrective is to hand though in the work of Carlen (1992) who prefers left realism over the feminist anti-criminology of Smart (1990). Her critical reading of left realism may not have turned its attention to masculinity but her commitment to perpetual questioning of knowledge production including feminism and realism opens the possibility of a fully gendered left realism which rejects, "the absurdity of the notion that there is a distinctly feminist *method* in criminology or sociology" (1992:55) and is not afraid to "make judgements, as to more or less desirable states of affairs" (1992:63).

Male-orientated criminology has offered its own standpoints before, Cain (1990b) notes Becker's (1967) taking of sides and Matza's opposition to correctionalism can be seen in this light too, as might Gilroy's defence of black youth (1987). Cain discusses the feminist standpoint of Hartsock (1983) which posits a feminist standpoint epistemology which is the opposite of male demands for absolute truths revealed by the rigid application of reason which objectifies the subject of research and separates rather than unifies theory and practice but particularly excludes emotion and experience. On the contrary women's experience of participating in both the abstract world of men as subordinates and in their own more embodied, concrete world made it easier for them to unify theory and practice objectivity and involvement. Hartsock gives some weight to women's involvement in domestic production

and reproduction and also to the bodily blurring involved in sex and childbirth all of which make both concrete and holistic ways of thinking easier for women. This position is a privileged one but still requires to be chosen, hence Smart's reference to the struggle. Cain makes the point that sex involves 'blurring' for men too.

Smart's final category is feminist postmodernism, which "unlike standpoint feminism it does not seek to impose a different unitary reality...Thus the aim of feminism ceases to be the establishment of the feminist truth and becomes the deconstruction of truth and the analysis of the power effects which claims to truth entail" (1990:82). She gives as an example of a Foucauldian feminist understanding of rape which seeks to examine the discourses by which, "the vagina comes to be coded - and experienced - as a place of emptiness and vulnerability, the penis as a weapon" (Woodhull, 1988:171). That is how the feminist standpoint of women's experience of rape actually privileges the coding of the female body as vulnerable and therefore concedes to men that power over them which it seeks to overturn. For Smart the impact of postmodernism on criminology is to render it in need of feminism but not *vice versa*. For her, it is, "hard to see what criminology has to offer feminism." (1990:84). Carlen (1992) sees what perhaps Smart is unwilling to concede that the deconstruction by postmodernists applies to feminism too.

Some examples of feminist work are examined below. Mies (1993) sets out a strict doctrine that the 'new wine' of feminism should not be put in the old patriarchal bottles of existing methodology, arguing much like Ramazanoglu that, "there is a contradiction between the prevalent theories of social science and methodology and the political aims of the women's movement" (1993:66). Therefore, "feminist women must deliberately and courageously integrate their repressed, unconscious female subjectivity, that is, their own experience of oppression and discrimination into the research process" (1993:68). This requires 'conscious partiality' in favour of women but should not be confused with, "mere subjectivism or simple empathy" (1993:68). She enjoins the feminist researcher to be active in the struggle for women's emancipation and give the view from below. Like Ramazanoglu she wishes to

change the status quo and quotes Mao Tse Tung on the need to chew the pear if one wants to know the taste. To extend her metaphor the survey, in particular, fails to chew any pears and consequently cannot describe the taste or the texture only the size and numbers of pears. Extending her metaphor further it can be seen that she also wants this research to enable women collectively to taste the pears in the men's orchard.

Conversely, Jayaratne (1993) recognises the failure of traditional research methods to address the questions important to women, its use to support the continued subordination of women and its objectification of them but argues that these methods should not be rejected outright. She also recognises that such methodology is often chosen because it produces significant results quickly and therefore feeds the needs of untenured academic to publish rather than perish. Such 'quick and dirty' procedures are often methodologically unsound but such is the seductiveness of the serried ranks of objective facts policy makers continue to prefer them. She argues that both the apparent objectivity of quantitative methods and its actual objectivity can have influence with policy makers for women.

Kelly (1990) illustrates this with her own research journey which is the reverse of that described by Reinharz (1979) in *On Becoming a Social Scientist*. Kelly sets out firmly convinced of the possibility of creating a feminist methodology and drew on her experience of activism in the women's movement with rape crisis lines and refuges in her PhD. It was research *with* and *for* women. It was her intention to end the 'silencing' of women by men's violence by using her research to 'name' that violence and its male perpetrators. She saw that asking, 'have you ever been raped' was very different from 'have you ever been forced to have sex'. Only face-to-face interviews with women by women are likely to reveal the numbers of women coerced into sex and the extent of violence involved in 'forced'. This is certainly the criticism levelled at the British Crime Survey and to a lesser extent at the Islington Crime Survey. So there was a political commitment to women but also a pragmatic concern to increase the validity of her research. However, the issues raised troubled many of the women. This required her to give ongoing support to her respondents. She was able to give that but



recognises that not all researchers, not even all feminist researchers, would be to offer that amount of support so an impersonal questionnaire might have enabled the women more control of their emotions.

Kelly recognises that supporting women is not the same as empowering them and records that attempts to involve women in the research (Mies 'bottom up view') are not unproblematic - they may even reject the researchers efforts at collaborative research and expect the researcher to do the work of analysis. The practicalities of funding and the subject studied ensured that the next project she discusses is not *with* women so much as *for* them - investigating the services offered by agencies in a London borough to women suffering violence from male partners. This involved a mixed methodology including questionnaires but also provided respondents with information on services available to women. Finally the exigencies of funding meant that a project which was to investigate child sex abuse using both self-report questionnaires and in-depth interviews ultimately relied on the questionnaires. Kelly sees that, "Certain research questions, important to feminists, can only be answered where relatively large numbers, and a cross-section of the population, participate in the study" (1990:113). This still leaves the difficulty of devising questions that reveal the extent of child sex abuse without further abusing the children in the questioning process and offers the chance of support through links with local services. It is this concern for the researched that makes this recognisably feminist as a method.

A further variety of views is provided by Gelsthorpe in her discussion of the practicalities of bringing her feminism to research methods in criminology. She concludes, in opposition to Mies, that feminist research is 'good' research under a new name, that is, "old wine in new bottles" (1990:89). She also usefully summarises some of the components of feminist research. Distilled these are: the priority of 'what to research' over 'how to research' (research 'by, on and for' women or 'for' women and therefore possibly with men); a preference for qualitative over quantitative (though some feminists would allow sensitive use of survey methods and interviews); a concern for the power differentials between researcher and

researched, objective social scientist and mere data, which thereby requires a less hierarchic, more participative mode of research; and finally a concern with “the subjective experience of doing research” (1990:93), that is to be accurate without accepting uncritically given (male) definitions of objectivity.

Whatever, view of feminism or feminist research chosen it is clear how these could effect women’s research into matters of immediate concern to women. Gelsthorpe notes the obviousness of the approach for violence against women but goes on to show how it can transform more conventional topics by discussing some of her own research on prisons, the CPS, social inquiry reports and the arrears court. These very mundane, ‘criminal justice process’ settings aimed at policy outcomes are very informative about how feminism can transform traditional methods, even when subject and method have been imposed.

Her work as a contract researcher for a male project director into male prisons in which gender was not an issue identified in the research proposal is illustrative. Her experience caused her to note the extent to which “experience, age, sex and ethnicity influences the field researcher’s role is often underplayed, if not ignored, in more traditional approaches to research which do not ask how far personal biography and experience influence the research role..” (1990:95). She could not be ‘one of the boys’, though an female assistant governor’s involvement in union matters was seen to give her a ‘pseudo man’ status. Just as trade union activity can enable a woman to acquire manly status so, counterintuitively, can an otherwise marginalised sexuality - note Burke’s finding that whilst admitted or suspected homosexuality worked against male police officers it could work for lesbians in making them ‘man’ enough for the job (Burke,1994). She notes that her introduction as “Dr Gelsthorpe” lead many to believe her interest was medical like that of the many female psychologists staff and inmates were used to seeing. Other potential roles for an otherwise unplaceable female presence were probation officer, Board of Visitors member or magistrate. The need to be good listeners for the research and preconceptions about female empathy meant she was often sought out as a ‘counsellor’. Whilst she noted these, and other gender issues, did feminism transform the

research? On reflection Gelsthorpe felt unable to separate a feminist and non-feminist self so cannot be sure but was sure that feminism did sensitise her to the gender issues and to ways of interviewing, particularly in not insisting that only she ask the questions and only respondents answer them (Oakley, 1981). She also specifically sought to include the experiences of women as wives and mothers of men in prison.

In her work on the CPS Gelsthorpe specifically rejected a solely qualitative ethnographic study of girls, taking “a ‘feminist’ approach [...] to mean a focus on ‘gender’ not an exclusive focus on women and girls” (1990:100) and for the practical reason that relatively few girls were prosecuted. The very hierarchic nature of the agencies involved ruled out a feminist insistence on collaborative research with extensive researcher/researched communication.

Her work on gender and ethnicity in social inquiry reports calls out for feminist methodology but she actually inherited the research at a point where data collection instruments and interview schedules had already been drafted. The method included both pairwise matching of a number of variables against ethnicity and gender but also content analysis of reports and semi-structured interviews with report writers. She notes a more feminist approach would have allowed defendants a say in what they saw as sexist or racist. She points out that as a middle-class, white academic with no experience of being a defendant her view of what is sexist or racist may differ from those reported on. A small scale interactionist account of the processes whereby defendants, officers and magistrates together create a joint, but unequal account might also have been considered. This might have allowed for the interests of the defendant to be brought into focus and posed against that of the ‘expert’.

The research into the arrears court was sparked by the observation that women were over represented but the methods themselves were multiple: court records, observation and interviews with defendants. The feminism is apparent in her willingness to end interviews with defendants if they became too distressed; arranging legal and financial advice and aims to discuss the findings with the magistrates with the aim of ameliorating the court’s practice for



future defendants.

Gelsthorpe in her conclusion muses on how feminist reflexivity has helped her think through research she confesses that:

it feels vulnerable to write this way it does demonstrate a key feminist principle: viewing the researcher's involvement in and experience of the research as both problematic and valid (1990:105)

Perhaps it is a mark of how deep academic habits run that even in this moment of vulnerability she cannot bring herself to say "I feel vulnerable doing this" or "it scared me". Finally she concludes that it is difficult to distinguish between good research and feminist research and that, "...feminist research can be carried out with men as the focus (and carried out by men)...".

However there are also radical and postmodern roots to reflective practice and theory as the work of Willis (1997) and Tyler (1997) suggest. Willis notes the,

insistent, almost neurotic, technical concern with the differentiation of participant observation from reportage and Art [...] that PO belongs with the 'sciences' and must, in the end, respect objectivity. There is a clear sociological fear of naked subjectivity. (1997:246)

and Tyler goes one step beyond with his observation that:

The problem with the realism of natural history is not, as is often claimed, the complexity of the so-called object of observation, nor failure to apply sufficiently rigorous and replicable methods, nor even less the seeming intractability of the language of description. It is instead a failure of the whole visualist ideology of referential discourse, with its rhetoric of 'describing,' 'comparing,' 'classifying,' and 'generalising' and its presumption of representational signification. In ethnography there are no 'things' there to be objects of a description...(1997:257).

Whereas Willis proposes his own - marxist - version of reflexivity Tyler's postmodernism leaves him only 'evoking' in his ethnography not 'describing'. Clearly the early chapters of this thesis seek to describe but in Chapter 8 some emphasis is placed upon the capacity of the media to 'evoke' images that the influence car purchase (and other uses).

So how does this thesis handle objectivity and subjectivity? What place is given to reflection? The writers cited above witness the theoretical difficulty of achieving objectivity and being a male car-driver with green pretensions adds to the difficulty of objectivity about spectacular car use (see Groombridge, 1995c for more details). However, there is no intention to be subjective - though the green perspective adds a polemic standpoint. Whilst my own total immersion in my gender and the UK's car culture makes for difficulties it provides much material for checking the statements of male joyriders, project workers, criminal justice personnel, media and politicians. Moreover, a good deal of the theory building and analysis has been done in car journeys - to and from fieldwork, to work, to leisure facilities and in domestic duties. And, yes I did feel much during fieldwork and preparation (see Groombridge, 1995c). My moments of greatest vulnerability remain as an occasional cycle commuter; saddling this work with yet another 'standpoint'.

### Constructing the research vehicle

Before discussing the actual methods used it is necessary to attempt to set some of the arguments of feminism into the context of a male researcher examining cultural practices and research settings which are associated with men and often exclusively peopled by men. Whilst Connell (1995:69) argues that, "modern epistemology recognizes, there is no description without a standpoint" his discussion of masculinities and the methods he used to explore them contains no discussion of epistemology.

Science and 'social science' demand objectivity. Objectivity is posited as the opposite of subjective in the discourse of both natural and social science. However, they share a belief in the self. In the case of objectivity the self has to be effaced whereas with subjectivity the self is supreme. The obliteration of the self and the selves of others is associated with masculine reason. The concern for the selves of others and for self is associated with femininity. This is a traditional stereotypical depiction of the relation of self to science but even if the terms were reversed the belief in the self remains. However, within philosophy, sociology and cultural

studies doubts have been cast on the self which move beyond 'who am I?' to 'what am I?'. For as Naffine argues of male criminologists:

Nor do they reflect much upon the fact that they themselves (that is, as criminologists) are mainly men, and that as (mainly white, all educated and so middle-class) men they might see the world in a particular and specific, not neutral and universal way. (1997:9)

If the researcher is to speak about 'others' objectivity requires that the self is effaced. On the other hand subjectivity may substitute the self of the researcher for that of the other much as a vanguardist party might substitute itself for the 'people'. Is there a way out of this, a way of speaking about others which acknowledges doubts about the selfhood of both the speaker and the spoken about? Probyn (1993:111) notes, "the trick, at the present moment, is to think and use the self - to follow lines of subjectification - without falling into humanist and universal individualism" but, "the problem is how to get to the self without going through the individual" (1993:119).

For her the answer lies in a particular reading of Foucault which makes, "it clear that the self is not an entity that can be represented; rather it is in the articulation of problematizations and practices that certain modalities of the self historically emerge" (1993:128). However, she warns, "At the same time, it is not an instruction to throw our selves over the brink into madness. The self has to be stretched but not broken, folded but not rendered schizophrenic" (1993:129). For Probyn it is important not only that a discourse is spoken, but who speaks it hence her attempt to find a way for women to speak of the self and others against the historical and contemporary background of being spoken as other. This feminist concern for women's capacity to speak is, however, illustrated by quoting Hebdige (1985:38) on , "finding ways of linking with and expressing emergent and residual forms of masculine identity". Her intention is to show how, "the self may be used epistemologically to reveal the nature of the articulation, and ontologically to acknowledge the affectivity of the articulation" (1993:134) or more simply in Hebdige's words, "We have to go on making connections, to *bear* our witness and to *feel* the times we're living through" (1985:39).



It is interesting that Hebdige uses the feminine metaphor of birth rather than the more 'seminal' metaphor of testament. This may be adherence to 'political correctness' but there are epistemological and ontological consequences to the metaphor of birth. It suggests a process of becoming and a tentativeness about the completeness of our knowledge about it. Whereas testifying (swearing on one's balls) that such a thing is a fact asserts ontology and certitude as to our knowledge of it.

Probyn, Hebdige and Foucault all set out 'sociologies of the self' that undermine the certainties of (social) science's capacity to speak without a self (objectivity) and even of standpoint feminisms foregrounding of the subjected female self. The self can neither obscure nor authenticate. Instead Probyn offers the self as "toolkit" (1993:128). This is a coincidentally happy metaphor for the subject of joyriding and car use. The toolkit to be used in understanding joyriding not only contains my self/selves but also particular methodological tools which differ little from those of more conventional research. The difference, perhaps, is the way I handle them. If I am clumsy will my spanner burr the edge of the nut without releasing it from the bolt; better that than hammering it. All the methodological tools used will be discussed in respect of their utility to the task rather than their conformity to fixed ideas of how they should be used to reveal an objective (social) scientific truth untainted by my (subjective) blood (the hammer, my thumb) amongst the oil and swarf.

Mies and Ramazanoglu are in a good position to argue for a distinctive women's or feminist perspective. There is an identifiable, if diffuse, women's movement and ongoing oppression of women and their voice. Their research practice can therefore seek to heal the rift between women's experience and the methods used to set out experience. For a man interested in using some of those methods there is even less of an organised men's movement to relate to and profound arguments about the extent to which men are oppressed. The men's movement can be seen as interested in restoring a lost masculinity, drumming in the woods with *Iron John* (Bly, 1990) or groups like Families Need Father's more concerned with regaining access to their children and fighting the Child Support Agency.

From all of the discussion above some guidelines for this research can be set out. Some of those guidelines are positive others negative but all are tentative. As should be clear it is not possible to state precise guidelines for research generally, similarities of nomenclature obscure real differences of practice, similar practices can be justified from a variety of methodological positions. This does not mean that methodologically anything goes though Feyerabend's (1988) critique of science is a useful corrective to mindless emulation of its 'methods'. However, even if clear guidelines could be agreed they are most likely to be quantitative or from the empiricist and positivist wings of qualitative research. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) and more strongly feminism argues for a reflexivity that looks uncomfortably like 'subjectivity' to those trained in an 'objectivist' tradition. Moreover, men cannot simply take over a feminist position, even where permission has been given. It is for these reasons that the guidelines set out below are tentative. There is no broad equivalent to 'feminist methodology' for men - except a reversion to the practice of ignoring gender whilst claiming the male as universal - that can be taken off-the-shelf, nor are these thoughts offered as one. Borrowings from Cain (1990a & b), Matza (1964) and the sociologists of the 'self' should be particularly noted as should a concern with 'realist' themes but critical - even 'idealist' - concerns tinged with postmodern doubts. The purpose of the research is not to reveal the underlying truth about joyriders or joyriding nor to align itself with correctionalism (even social democratic left realist correctionalism) as Ruggiero (1992:137) notes, "An approach strictly focussed on the mission of resolving problematic situations may in fact obstruct an understanding of their scope and dimensions".

Starting with the negative, and specific to this research, no claim is made that this is a phenomenology of joyriding or that *verstehen* was achieved with joyriders. The positive elements can be seen best in an engagement with Cain's (1990a) guidelines for 'good quality knowledge'. Cain's guidelines are chosen because they are comprehensive and generally amenable to the intentions of this research(er). There are differences, not least, the extent to which philosophical realism is an appropriate base on which to build. However, it does offer a way to proceed and can be seen for the while as the 'toolbag' in which the 'toolkit' can be kept.

Her constructed standpointism avoids the essentialism of Hartsock (1983) but cannot escape the doubts raised by postmodernism (Smart, 1990). Connell's (1995) acceptance of the 'onto-formativity' of practice - that human activity creates reality - appears to support her views.

Cain (1990a) sets out guidelines which are summarised below and related to the actual research undertaken.

First unthought realities require: open techniques (including novel ones); theory which enables new knowledge to be manipulated; open-mindedness about the process of theory building and; the technical capacity to move empirically out from the unit of observation.

Without necessarily accepting the full consequences of realist ontology it is clear that whatever the perceived reality of joyriding there may be as yet unthought realities which have gone, so far, unperceived and that open techniques are required to make it possible to think them. No truly novel techniques are proposed but the number of methods and scope of the investigation may be unusual for criminology.

Theory has been addressed elsewhere but as the disputes of Platt (1986) and Layder (1988) shows its precise connection to method is moot. Cain clearly intends like most feminists that the method and theory follow politics, that is should have a purpose. It is less clear what the politics of research into joyriding is but it is important. The research is *for* men but only in the very long-term. It is also, in these terms, *against* cars. The process of theory building has not been totally open-minded as an early theoretical assumption is that joyriding had affinities with and might best be seen as located within car culture. However, following her stipulation about the public nature of such work it is fairly clear that this assumption has been made but sometimes bracketed off for the purposes of research.

The extent to which this work can be empirically moved out from the specific site must await the 'retrospective heuristic' but some points can be made. Such is the scope of the research



both in terms of research sites, methods used and theories investigated that it is difficult to identify a 'unit of observation'. Masculinities and car culture are not congruent terms and even taken together do not comprise the totality of the reality that might be reached out to. Indeed feminisms and opponents of car culture might do well to resist such an imperial gesture. So the 'site' being investigated can be seen to be specific but large. However, where obviously discrete sites are examined - such as the motor projects - then attempts will be made to reach out to a larger reality.

Secondly already recognised realities require the use of hermeneutic investigations into the discourse of those recognising that reality.

What is already known about joyriding (Chapters 1, 2 and 3) stems from the discourses of media outrage, the law and correctionalist criminology. What is known about the car and car culture is taken-for-granted. All these varied and interconnecting discourses need to be analysed. Moreover, the work done on previously unthought realities itself develops a discourse that can be analysed and connections made with other discourses. This analytic work requires methods more common in cultural studies as the discourse is not just what joyriders, press, victims, sentencers or criminologists say about joyriding but can be seen in the practices of joyriders and of car advertisers.

Third, historical change in realities and knowledge about them requires study over time - long time in the field, follow ups or biographical data.

A historical dimension has been built into the discussion of joyriding to show that the known reality of joyriding at its height (media-wise) differs from the known reality of joyriding at other periods in history. The duration of fieldwork at the motor project sites was not long - in terms of standard ethnographies - but has involved follow ups. Moreover, the personal reflexivity of masculinities draws on nearly a lifetime and that on car culture over twenty six years.

Fourth, theoretical reflexivity about the specifics of the site and accountability to those who share your standpoint.

It is difficult to state concisely the size of the site and its specificity other than to repeat that what is being studied is the practice of young men's particular car use which is called joyriding by others - often male - whose own car use cannot be taken-for-granted. This makes for a potentially large site but its specifics should continue to be brought to the fore - the major specifics are men and cars.

Neither the site or these specifics nor any current politics point obviously to a standpoint or group to whom accountability can be rendered. 'Methodologists' are accountable to 'science' or currently acceptable academic practice, feminists see themselves as accountable to women. Were the specifics of this research women or what men do to them then Cain (1990a) and Gelsthorpe (1990) give a warrant to men to do feminist research and therefore be accountable to women. Indeed research by men into what men do to women or each other should have some accountability to 'men', if not to those men personally. Here the male criminologist may side with the 'correctionalists' intentions if not methods and institutional bias. Nelken (1995:23) is helpful here:

if the subjects of our theorising are not, or cannot be, included in the process of research itself, it becomes all the more important to give attention to the way we 'represent the other'.

Clearly joyriding does effect women (Campbell, 1993) but not in the direct way that domestic violence or rape does. Not only is this research not about individual joyriders as research objects or subjects so it is not about the victims of joyriders. Women, as a 'class' could be seen to suffer from car culture too: they own fewer cars, drive them less often where they have use of them and are positioned within car culture as subordinate. Car culture feeds into public transport policies which amplify the effects for women of that subordinate position and crime and fear of crime impact on both women's car and public transport use (Beuret, 1991). Again this is a large site with its specifics which is not denied by this research. To use a car/planning

metaphor this is still a 'green field site' on which only a few footpaths appear, it has not been concreted over, tarmacadamed or by-passed.

Already it is clear it has not been possible to follow the guidelines for the production of 'good quality knowledge' in every detail but they do inform the research and provide a useful way of talking about it. Following, or attempting to follow, the guidelines produces knowledge that Cain says must be made public. That is both personal reflexivity and techniques must be displayed. In this Chapter the techniques are displayed and the influences acknowledged. Her final injunction that theory produced must be inclusive and account "for our own knowledge as well as that of those we investigate" (1993:139) is taken very seriously.

It is necessary to go beyond the empiricism of positivism and the 'objectivity' of academic writing, however, on the other hand pure subjectivism does not advance knowledge either and the self that guarantees it has been cast into doubt by both structuralism and post-modernism. But as Bourdieu says:

Objectivism constitutes the social world as a spectacle offered to an observer who takes up a 'point of view' on the action and who, putting into the object the principles of his relation to the object, proceeds as if it were intended solely for knowledge and as if the interactions within it were purely symbolic exchanges. (1994:95)

The actions of joyriders and the researcher can both be seen within the *habitus* "the system of structured, structuring dispositions...which is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical functions." (1994:95). The theoretical nature of the work can allow the author to hide behind the mask of olympian objectivity. Much of this chapter has been given over to considering how this can be addressed in this research.



Having set out some of the general problems of social research and the specific problems of research into joyriding by a male researcher we now turn to the methods used, which were:

Cultural analysis of film, advertisements and the literature on joyriding on as components/generators of car culture;

Reflexive participant observation of car culture;

Observation and participant observation at motor projects and at meetings of and about motor projects;

Observations of dramas presented in schools aimed at preventing joyriding;

Questionnaires to motor project users and to those referring to them; and

Semi-structured interviews with interested parties to a motor project.

Lash (1995:167) notes approvingly the importance of cultural studies in understanding the significance of information and communications structures in 'reflexive modernity'. Hebdige (1979) discusses briefly the trajectory of cultural studies from Hoggart and Williams different concerns for 'culture', through Barthes semiotics to the concern for structures and hegemony of Althusser and Gramsci. Since then 'cultural studies' have taken a feminist and postmodernist turn. Whilst some of the formalist linguistics, like ethnomethodology, can be seen to have a method that can be described and followed much of 'cultural studies' ultimately relies on 'reading' a text. That 'reading' may be informed by psychoanalytical concepts, a gay sensibility, feminist or marxist polemic or combinations of these and other discourses, politics or practice. Whilst Hebdige clearly sets himself within this tradition - citing Barthes and *Resistance through Rituals* as inspirations - he provides no guide on how to replicate his work. Indeed since the intention is to interpret the culture no exact replication can be expected. As

McRobbie says Hebdige,

focusses elliptically on subcultural style as *signifier* rather than as a series of distinct cultural expressions. Style he claims, takes place several steps away from the material conditions of it's followers' existence and continually resists precise historical analysis. One of its objectives, then, is to be forever out of joint with mainstream dominant culture: it evaporates just as it crystallises. (1991:17)

She does not, other than elliptically herself, make the point that Hebdige is so enamoured of style that he, himself, seeks also to remain 'forever out of joint' in his analysis. Whilst - in Chapter 8 - I will argue that joyriders are not a subcultural response I do believe that its meaning is as elusive as the style that Hebdige 'reads' and therefore must also be 'read'.

As can be seen from this brief discussion of Hebdige it is difficult to describe the method by which joyriding can be read. In part, the whole of this thesis is a 'reading' of joyriding rather than research into joyriding that offers a 'precise historical analysis', let alone an aetiology, in the conventional criminological sense. In considering the relationship of joyriding and car culture it is clear that in addition to a 'reading' of car advertising the literature discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 can also be read as texts in which the discourses of masculinity and car culture are enscribed.

Drawing on Williamson (1978) and Naffine's use of Derrida's 'deconstruction' we can also see that "deconstruction is not destruction" (1997:86). Naffine shows how, in criminology, woman has been a subordinate term on which the dominant term 'man' depends. This has been influential in my views of criminology but a similar deconstruction of the terms of car culture shows how the dominant terms of the safe and useful motor car depend on and bear the trace of subordinated terms such as joyriding and road rage. However, it is not claimed to be an objective method but neither is it based upon random choices. It would be possible to select a tight time period and note all car and petrol adverts and subject them to a content analysis which generates statistics about the relative appearance of men and women, operationalise criteria for 'responsible' and 'irresponsible' messages etc. This might have been warranted

had my hypothesis been that these images were implicated in causing joyriding. Then one might measure these and then look for correlations between joyriders and non-joyriders. The argument here is that researcher and researched are saturated by these images and they need to be understood from within. Thus I am not an insider to joyriding but I am an insider to car driving and we are all (car users or not) insiders to car culture.

Broadly then, the 'method' was to select TV, radio and print advertisements which illustrated the connections between gender, joyriding and car culture during the latter period of the research period. So the advertisements do not represent a sample but they are 'representative' and the adverts not covered do not present a different picture which has been suppressed. All the advertisements can be read as having a primary meaning of 'buy our car', even if like the first Nissan Almeira adverts the copy line says "Don't buy this car". However, it is contended that there is a secondary meaning, 'car are good, useful, pleasurable etc' and that in presenting the primary and secondary meanings the advertises refer to previous adverts for their products, other products and other cultural products - high, low or middle-brow. The reference to other products - intertextuality - directly or indirectly connects their product with other products, experiences etc. that signify for the reader/viewer.

My reading of car advertisements is informed by a number of influences: first, my own experience of 'cultural studies' methods gained from the Open University course, *Popular Culture*; and second, my own interaction with car culture and the process of research which added a host of issues around the car and driving to my existing concern for gender.

However, there are problems with these methods related to its subjective nature. It is tempting to stretch the 'reading' to fit the facts or put a gloss on them. Naturally, I believe that my 'reading' is appropriate and informative but I cannot claim it is true or correct. It is easier to illustrate the point by checking Hebdige's reading of subcultural style. As McRobbie hints it is difficult to be sure what Hebdige is saying but he seeks to associate punk and black styles to suggest that these have no necessary connection to class directly and may also be formed by



the discourse that condemns them. It would not be appropriate to make a judgement here whether he is right but to note that - unlike many of his colleagues - he does, at least, take the issue of 'race' seriously. Indeed, 'race' is his way into a discussion of style.

It is therefore ironic that Hebdige allows some elementary mistakes about 'black culture' to mar his reading. In a stylistic inversion he notes the "ominous significance" of the use made of "humble dustbin lids" by the police at the Notting Hill Carnival when they would normally be "the staple of every steel band" (1979:25). That the police used the lids, before the invention of the short and long shields now used, is not in doubt but no steelband makes use of dustbin lids but of oil drums. Second, on page 30 the group are misspelt 'Aswaad', rather than 'Aswad' and; third, on page 143 he describes 'dreadlocks' as "plaited". If they are plaited they will be extensions rather than the natural hair which is twisted into 'locks' with oils. These errors about the culture that he puts at the centre of his 'reading' are worrying - but do not 'disprove' his thesis.

As has been suggested in the section on observations at motor projects and for some of the reasons described in the discussion of feminism and the self in ethnography my life as a man and as a driver and the lives and driving of other men is the object of observation as is most graphically demonstrated in the account below. As Becker (1973:84) admitted "Most of my observation was carried out on the job, and even on the stand as we played". Similarly Corrigan (1979:13) defending his failure to examine girls says, "I was going to have to use a lot of the insights gained from my own adolescent experience". I make the same claim but do not claim that I have a unique epistemological standpoint of being a man or a driver that privileges my account. Indeed, since being a man and a driver may reinforce one-another frequently a transitional standpoint is taken that calls both these standpoints into question. It is not possible to take the standpoint of a non-driving woman but the insights of both feminism and 'green' issues are paradoxically used to achieve some distance from the topic.

The standpoint of radical feminism for women was and continues to be justified as a well-

spring for action against patriarchy. As a man my battle with patriarchy is not that of the daughter or wife but that of the son against the father - the authority of what is to count as manliness (or research). Sympathy for my sisters cannot therefore be complete. As the more critical feminists discussed above accept sex and domestic involvement are components of male experience too.

If interactions between joyriders and between joyriders and staff at a motor project were the prime concern of this research extensive long-term participant observation at a motor project would have been a very suitable method of research. There is a long history of this form of ethnography in anthropology and sociology. Given the age and class background of the researcher participant observation of joyriding directly would have proved difficult, however several very short periods of participant observation at motor projects were undertaken. As will be seen below the number and duration of these visits is insufficient to qualify as 'participant observation' in the classical sense but for the reasons set out at the end of Chapter 3 they were sufficient to suggest that extensive theoretical work was needed on issues around masculinity (including how to research it) and car culture. Moreover, the visits confirmed the findings (and absences) of the literature discussed at length in Chapters 2 and 3. The burden of participant observation was shifted from the limited setting of the motor project to the researcher's own experience of car culture.

Observations were made by attending the TRAX Motor Project, Oxfordshire, for all or part of nine evenings from September 1993 to July 1994, roughly once a month. A similar amount of time was spent at the Ilderton Motor Project (12 times between February and July 1993). Access to both was easily achieved, particularly the TRAX project as the researcher had been contracted to carry out an evaluation of the project. Previous association with the Probation Service through the Home Office meant that a number of other motor projects had been visited prior to commencing the research (Bradford Motor Education Project and West Midlands Probation Service Projects at the Birmingham Wheels Park). Additional knowledge about motor projects had also been gained through reports of these and other projects

(Dragon Wheels, Swansea; DRIVE, Durham; Telford Motor Project, Shropshire and Walker Wheels, Newcastle) as well as membership of and attendance at AGMs of the National Association of Motor Projects. Follow up visits to Ilderton and discussions with staff there have also been undertaken. Three banger race meeting were attended with the projects - one an open meeting at Wimbledon Stadium where over 17 years olds raced against drivers from private teams, the other part of an open meeting but where younger drivers raced only against other motor projects under the auspices of the National Association of Motor Projects.

The purpose of 'hanging around' the projects was made clear to those attending and those working at and with the projects: a) to evaluate the project and b) to contribute to the researcher's own study of joyriding. Additionally access was given to Management Committee meetings of the TRAX project. This was in the role as researcher to the project. This was clearly overt but had an unintended covert side. Sometimes attendance at meetings was to meet people and to hear their opinion; these therefore served inadvertently as discussion groups. Other meetings were ostensibly for the researcher to report progress and make suggestions.

Two performances of an 'anti-joyriding play' were also observed. It was also decided to revisit the schools a couple of weeks later and talk to the children and teachers about its impact. Work produced by the children in the weeks after the performance was also examined. Finally the actors were questioned informally on the success of the play and the differences in children's, and teachers, reactions. Performances at two schools on 28 April 1993 were observed. This was described in Chapter 1.

The school for the morning performance was John Milton Primary School is near New Covent Garden and the Dogs Home. It is set beside a main road and next to a number of estates. It is about 10 minutes walk from the gentrification of 'South Chelsea'. Pupils of Sir James Barrie School also attended. There are about 40 children, slightly more girls than boys. Only a quarter are white. The majority of pupils are of Afro-Caribbean descent. There are a few



children of Asian and Chinese descent. The children are a little unruly to start but soon become rapt in the performance. Quieter moments occasioned some restlessness. The prime target audience here totals 3 young white boys.

The second school to be visited in the afternoon is John Burns School. This is located in an area of attractive terraced housing. Because of the absence of a staff member a total of about 100 are going to watch the performance but only the top class of 10-11 year olds will participate in the workshop. In the introduction the mention of joyriding seems to occasion some knowing glances amongst some of the boys. A teacher later confided that she thinks one boy is involved with older boys who might be joyriding. He is black but many more children at this school are white.

As part of an evaluation of the TRAX Motor Project (Groombridge, 1994) a small survey was conducted amongst users of (members) and referrers (agencies) to the project. The first thing to note is that the survey, comprising two questionnaires, was intended to augment observations and interviews already completed at the project. Ideally the total population to be surveyed would have been identified and an appropriate sample taken. Questions would have been asked on a wider variety of topics and in a sufficiently tight way to allow quantification and cross tabulation of variables.

To maximize cooperation the questionnaires to users - some of whose literacy was poor - had to be kept short. To allow for comparisons some of the questions to members and to agencies were the same. This necessarily meant that these were often simplistic though usefully provocative. The questionnaires for the TRAX Team members were handed out by the researcher at the 'chip break' to those attending on two separate nights to the under and over 17 teams with a brief verbal explanation repeating the purpose of the research and of the guarantee of confidentiality. They were collected at the end of the break by the researcher. Those for agencies were sent to key persons in the Magistracy, Social Services, Youth Service and Probation Service asking that they bring them to the attention of colleagues.

In total ten TRAX team members and nineteen members of outside agencies completed questionnaires. The researcher's personal observation of the TRAX team members suggests that they represent a 'core' of those regularly attending with some peripheral members there by chance that evening. The total number of Magistrates and staff numbers in the Youth Service, Social and Probation Services are not known but nineteen cannot be considered a representative sample, moreover they are most likely to be those with an interest in or knowledge of TRAX. They may also have been influenced unduly by the key person to whom the questionnaires were sent. The questionnaires are set out in full with the accompanying letter/instructions at Appendix 1 (agencies) and 2 (members).

Eleven interviews were carried out with respondents with an interest in the TRAX Motor Project - from police to teachers. Some interviewees were able to represent more than one view; a councillor could give the view of local people, themselves and often of a group or other committee to which they belong - for example one was also a Magistrate. Most were interviewed for about three quarters of an hour in a semi-structured manner about joyriding and the contribution that TRAX made to its prevention or 'cure'. One group of magistrates were interviewed in a group in the presence of the Justices' Clerk. See Appendix 3 for interview schedule.

### Conclusion

This chapter has spent some time reviewing methodological issues, particularly critiques raised by feminism. It is not possible to simply employ those methods out of context. Anarchist arguments for no methods are rejected and the plurality of postmodern concerns noted. Ultimately the methods chosen reflect the reality of joyriding but the extent to which that reality is constituted by both the discourses around and the materiality of the car.

## CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS: JOYRIDING

My horse he spurres with sharp desire my hart:  
 He sits me fast, how ever I do sturre;  
 And now hath made me his hand so right,  
 That in the Manage myselfe takes delight.

(Sir Philip Sydney 1554-1586, Sonnet 49 *Astrophil and Stella* )<sup>1</sup>

The quote above refers to the pleasure taken in riding a horse. This pleasure cannot be simply translated down the centuries or down the class structure to be applied directly to joyriding or any particular car use. However, it does indicate a psychic state which may be innate but its expression is socially constructed and constrained. Not everyone then could ride a horse, many more can now drive a car but can they (we) drive a car in the ways that will give them (us) pleasure?

Nearly thirty years ago Downes noted:

...although adept at borrowing cars, they apparently made no attempt to sell them, even though they knew of sources for purchase. But the rate of theft of car accessories in conjunction with take and drive away points to a limited form of delinquency.[...]It may be that the delinquent steals for imagined utilitarian ends but possession of the object stolen reveals the illusory nature of the original impulse; e.g. he steals a car because pressured by commercial-ideological forces into thinking he needs one, but soon realises the falsity of the need and discards it. While this would account for a single car-borrowing, it would not account for a car-borrowing career, for disenchantment with the object stolen would be final, and the delinquent would cease to pursue car-borrowing. (1966:204)

Downes raises but does not follow up the 'commercial-ideological' nor the psychic attractions.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter the literature discussed in Chapter 2 and 3 will be combined with fieldwork observations to explore joyriding. However, those looking for an aetiology of joyriding will be disappointed. The literature reviewed and the fieldwork reveal no explanations beyond the common-sense one that it's fun and easy to do. Otherwise, as has

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1. My thanks to Jean Gooding, English Department, St Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill for this quote.

2. His comments could have come from Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1958).



been shown, and Downes is an example, joyriding is treated as crime or delinquency and explained within the general explanation of crime. It is therefore proposed to explore joyriding in this section by brief reference to broad criminological paradigms derived from Young (1981 and 1994) to see what they do, or might, say about joyriding. However, to set this theoretical discussion in context some direct observations from fieldwork are set out below.

As has been said this thesis builds, but does not rely, upon observations amongst young men at motor projects, those that work with them, reflection on the author's own car use - past and present - towards a consideration of wider issues of car culture, particularly gender and the environment. However, the original inspiration for the work, joyriding, did feature in some observations or conversations at the motor projects as these extracts from my fieldnotes show.

J tells me that he has never been caught and never crashed. He is here voluntarily; frightened by other people's crashes and problems with the law. The media coverage and the Aggravated Vehicle-Taking Act may have contributed to his unease. He says that he got into car crime when, out of work, he started hanging around. Before then he had been working as a bicycle courier but had been hit by a Porsche jumping a red light. It wrecked the bike. He could not afford a new one so had no job. He makes no claim that being run down by a car lead him to start taking them. I don't know whether to believe him but it makes a neat ironic parable. (24 March 1993)

L tells me very quickly that he's broken the law. I ask him if he means 'the law' or the project's law. He has been joyriding and been caught by the police. They aren't going to prosecute but the project's Wednesday meeting gave him a rough time. Normally he'd expect to get his bus fare home (or BFH, their slang for being chucked out of the project) but they take pity on him and ban for five races. (10 May 1993)

It is ironic that some of the cars used by the projects are given to them by the police after they have been abandoned by joyriders. As the following observation suggests, joyriding can be used by local youth specifically to wind up the local police:

The car has been given to them by the police from the pound. It had been stolen and stripped but the thieves had also inscribed in the paint work a number of messages on the roof and bonnet: "SHIT CAR CHEERS FOR THE BITS SUCKER!! BLOBBY"; and; "HOTTERS GUESS WHO HURLEY BABY?". There is also scratched a picture of a person behind bars above it is enscribed "NOT ME", and below "TOO GOOD". (6 January 1994)

The claim to be 'too good' to be behind bars chimes in with the findings of both Briggs (1991) and Light *et al* (1993) of over confidence in driving but, probably also correctly appraises the chances of being caught. However, it should not be forgotten that 'joyriders' can own property and be victims of crime, for instance:

M told us of a run in he'd had with the traffic police ("Cunts!"). On his way to work one morning he had, again, to scout round the Estate to find his motor bike. He finds it but it is damaged. He is pulled over by the cop who demands that he repair the damage within 14 days. He is also done for failing to display an L plate. M is outraged at the cost of spares, the power of the police and the ignominy of having to display an L plate. "It shows you up doesn't it."  
(fieldnotes, 10 May 1993)

Later J tells me of an incident where someone attempted to steal his motor bike. His comments suggest he is more appalled by the incompetence of the attempt than being victimised by it. Indeed, ex-members of the project who now drive legally are very careful to secure their cars. (fieldnotes, 14 June 1993)

In addition to their experience of joyriding and vehicle-related victimisation those attending projects also cheerfully admitted to or obliquely referred to other law-breaking - theirs and others as these quotes from fieldnotes record:

It is still raining a bit as we go to leave L asks for a lift back. MA is made to give us a lift. I sit in the back. I am the only one to use my safety belt. (14 June 1993)

This minor infraction might be contrasted with the almost continual references to drugs and one to guns:

I am asked if I have smoked dope, the question is immediately withdrawn as if it is too impertinent a question, but I answer in the affirmative anyway. (2 November 1993)

The conversation over the chips is vary varied, and for the most part incomprehensible to me. It ranges over drugs, cars, car parts, driving and the loss of N's hat and the suggestion that he is having an affair with a workmate of his wife. (2 November 1993)

Video games are discussed such as how to get past "the ghosts on Chocolate Island" and who was best out of SE and his brother on *Monaco*, a motor racing game. They also mention that they recently travelled to Abingdon to play a motor racing arcade game called either *RAC Rally* or *Super Celica* (I thought this was the name of a Toyota). It sounds very realistic they speak of it with relish. J says that the chip shop on the Cowley Road has it but SE says he can't go there; making gunshot gestures with his hands.  
(fieldnotes, 6 January 1994)



In an in-depth interview SE (1 February 1994) told me that over the last couple of years the scene in Oxford has become more violent, because of the drugs trade. Knives were now common and guns seen. During the course of that interview he arranged, over the 'phone, for the delivery of cannabis but also continued to care for his children - including nappy changing - whilst his wife went out to work.

A personal communication from Tim Chapman of Belfast's Turas Project alerted me to their concern that in turning young men away from joyriding they returned them to their homes with the obvious potential for domestic violence against mothers or partners. The following observations pick up on some of these issues:

The TV programme *Gladiators* is mentioned. Apparently one of the female Gladiator/Contestant's breasts fell out of the costume. Talking about where someone's girlfriend lives leads to a discussion about a tough family called ..... who live in that area. Particularly one of the women of that family is discussed in slightly awed terms. Apparently she laid one guy out with one punch. He got up after, N thought he wouldn't have been able to. It also became clear that a number of the partners of the group were not averse to hitting them or in N's case pushing him down the stairs (because of his infidelity? see 2/12/93). They don't seem worried about admitting to this. It is treated quite lightly but A's question as to whether they themselves commit domestic violence brings silence but I sense some discomfort. (fieldnotes, 6 January 1994)

So how might such observations and those of others reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3 be fitted into criminological paradigms?

There are a number of ways of categorising theories of crime and deviance. Morrison (1995), for instance, set out eleven, based upon a Humean consideration of 'human nature'.

Young's typology (1981 and 1994) is chosen because it is better known and offers a structure that helps organize the following discussion.<sup>3</sup> His whole argument could be taken as

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3. Henry and Milovanovic (1996) use the dichotomies to organize their discussion of modernist theories of law and crime.



teleological - the history of criminology leading inevitably to left realism.<sup>4</sup> However, there are problems with Young's typology. He fails to discuss gender adequately, other than in his claim for left realism to have taken feminism seriously. However, for our purposes this failure can be used to interrogate the theories on this issue - in short, most fail at the asking of the question 'Does this apply to women too?'. Feminism will be discussed as a separate category along with those that Young discusses and the next section takes this as a starting point for working in gender and men. Postmodernism is also considered as a critique of left realism but more for what it might add - thus favouring reconstruction over deconstruction (Henry and Milovanovic 1996). Furthermore, his discussion of positivism does not always sufficiently distinguish between biological, psychological and sociological positivisms. This may be for the very good reason that it is the similarities that he wishes to present - as deficient. 'Strain theory' is left in the anomalous position of meriting a discussion in its own right much of which then overlaps with positivism.

The resulting typology then is:

- Conservatism
- Classicism
- Positivism - biological and psychological
- Positivism - Sociological including Strain Theory
- Social Reaction/New Deviancy/Labelling
- Marxism/Left Idealism
- Administrative Criminology
- Right Realism
- Left Realism
- Feminism
- Postmodernism

Conservatism is ignored as a criminological theory by many for the good reason that it is largely atheoretical and coincides at many points with common-sense and traditional/moral accounts of sin. Its major tenets, as drawn out by Young (1981) are: a) the priority of order over law - the 'rights' of society over those of the offender ; b) respect for tradition - as defined by the

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4. There is an irony in Smart's (1990) rejection of criminology's claims: by default she implicitly accepts left realism's claims to superiority in the field of criminology. Otherwise she (1990:73) says in her attack on Jock Young that "he sees the influence of North American criminology in a positive light (for example, Cohen 1955; Cloward and Ohlin, 1961 and Matza, 1969)".

powerful; c) an emphasis on lack of morality as a cause of crime and the retrenching of morality as a cure for it; d) its atheoreticism, having no organised discourse or codified body of work and; e) its tendency to deploy metaphors from biology to describe crime and criminals. Where it considers gender differences in crime, or any other behaviour, it is likely to resort to a biological explanation or scriptural authority.

Since for conservatives the temptations of crime continuously surround us only the moral armour of self-control prevents everyone lapsing into crime. The cause of joyriding then is no different to the causes of other wickedness whether of whispering Trappists or mass murder. This blanket condemnation is not very satisfying criminologically but its potential relativism could be used to condemn the car as the work of the devil (Berger, 1979). As conservatism is a censorious moral discourse it is deployed in traditional ways and against traditional targets but in shifting to the moral ground invites opposing definitions of morality. Whilst 'New Age' spirituality might threaten the conservatism of organised religion its morality of conservation has both radical and conservative aspects. Its radicalism opposes - with criminalised direct action - the whole basis of car culture in order to conserve the Earth thereby ironically placing them - with conservatives - against joyriding. Similarly radical feminism shares deeply conservative views of men. Ironically this conservatism can be seen in the 'radical' criticisms of motor projects (Jackson, 1992 and Buckley and Young, 1996). For conservatives prevention comes from morality ('Good people don't joyride', 'Green people don't joyride' etc) or fear ('Joyriders kill, you're a joyrider, we'll treat you as if you are a killer.') Yet 74% of Light *et al*'s (1993) respondents acknowledged that it was wrong to take vehicles.

Where conservatism emphasises immorality and offers non-rational punishments as a general deterrent, Classicism sees miscalculation and offers rational punishments as an individual deterrent. Clearly the potential joyrider has not calculated the benefits and disbenefits of his actions. The exceedingly short term thrill of joyriding sits uneasily with the delayed gratification of motoring and cannot admit other terms to the equation - such as the victim or their own future insurance premiums. Whilst the hedonism of joyriding fits with Classicist psychology its

irrationality breaches Classicist norms. Yet many programmes for joyriders seek to add terms to the equation and the cognitive skills to calculate them. Primary crime prevention measures against car crime such as alarms and immobilisers assume a limited rationality sufficient to displace or 'deflect' (Pease, 1994). Yet the biggest factor in the calculations of joyriders is the prospect of detection and apprehension and 74% of Light *et al*'s (1993) respondents thought that they would not be caught or put the idea out of their minds. For some, this was because of opinions about police priorities or their own capacity to drive sufficiently well not to arouse suspicion. The fact that only a fifth had avoided coming to the notice of the police puts this confidence in context. Light *et al* (1993) attempt a calculation of the risk of being caught for theft of or unauthorized taking of motor vehicles (from figures for recorded crime) and conclude that about six percent of offences committed (and their sample had taken 70 cars on average) lead to an offender being cautioned or convicted. The extent to which the joyriders they interviewed overestimated the likelihood of receiving a custodial sentence offers no comfort to conservatives or Classicists (see Light *et al*, 1993:61-65). Perhaps it is too much to expect rational explanations of and solutions to joyriding when cars are themselves sold through non-rational advertising (see Chapters 7 and 8). Further a utilitarian classicism might also calculate the balance of advantage in having opted for the car as the prime means of transport in a small and crowded island.

Inverting the voluntarism of Classicism, the determinism of Positivism is most marked in its biological and psychological varieties. The psychological literature on driving and road safety (for instance; AA, 1992; McKenna, 1991) does not discuss joyriding but its methods and conclusions could be applied. Arguing the case for a strong but not exclusive genetic component to the etiology of crime Mednick *et al* (1987) conclude that there is a strong relationship between the chronic offending of adopted children and that of their biological rather than adopted parents. Joyriding is often marked by chronic offending but the literature discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 confines itself to occasionally noting that fathers or elder brothers often taught joyriders to drive or to steal but this would be true of non-joyriders and of offenders more generally. Indeed, Mednick *et al* (1987) found no relationship between the



type of offending of parents and that of children. They divided crimes into property, violence and sexual but it is not obvious which category joyriding would come into. Legally it is a property crime; and like all motoring offences it has a potential for violence and its gendered character likens it to sexual offending. Rowe, who otherwise emphasises the heritability of traits specifically notes, "Genes do not code themselves for jimmying a lock or stealing a car" and emphasises "the skilled car thief has to learn how to hot wire a car" (1996:285).

Laying a greater stress on the environment and its interaction with psychological dispositions - specifically the factors of extraversion, neuroticism and psychoticism - that have a genetic basis Eynsenck (1987) concluded that different personality patterns could be linked to different types of crime and that even within types of crime differences could be seen between the introversion of those who kill family members and the extraversion of professional gunmen. Whilst none of the studies that Eynsenck considers specifically address joyriding, the findings of some on sensation-seeking as an aspect of the extraversion trait could clearly be relevant to joyriding - both the literature and field observation confirm the importance of the 'buzz' - but such sensation-seeking also applies to much driving behaviour and many male leisure activities. Recast as 'risk' there is a growing literature on this subject (Beck, 1992) which is already being applied to the car (Smerdon and South, forthcoming)

If it is accepted that genetics and psychological dispositions may have an influence on anti-social behaviour - and in this weak formulation it is not specifically rejected - it still fails to explain why one form of anti-social behaviour, like joyriding, is chosen over another *or* why some forms, like joyriding, are singled out from equally dangerous activities for condemnation. Obviously biological and psychological explanations have less difficulty in explaining sex differences in offending but these remain deeply problematic for sociologists and most feminists.<sup>5</sup>

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5. See Rose S (1996) 'The Rise of Neurogenetic Determinism' *Soundings* Issue 2 Spring 1996 pp 53-70.

Sharing a commitment to the modernist project of biological and psychological Positivism but emphasising nurture over nature sociological positivists, including Strain theorists, have had enormous influence within criminology and some of the material discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 comes from this tradition. It also makes a contribution to some of the earliest discussions of masculinity (see Chapter 7) so is mostly mentioned here for completeness. Though it is interesting to note that Lilly, Cullen and Ball's (1995:66) discussion of Agnew's 'general strain theory' cite the loss of the use the family car as potentially leading to auto-theft. Within such a theory joyriding would be a cure for the 'Summertime Blues'. Picking up on this and considering other potential 'strains' a fuller consideration of the application of strain theory allied to left realism is set out later.

The revolt against positivism in the 60s and 70s lead to theories of Social Reaction, New Deviancy and Labelling. The extent to which these differ and whether they constitute a theory or a perspective is not addressed here. The significant factor in this paradigm is the symbolic interactionist emphasis on the meaning to the individual of acts rather than the 'objective' conditions that are seen to determine them. Allied to this is the significance agents of social or moral control give to those meaningful acts and how their actions can reinforce activities that are seen to be anti-social. The literature and fieldwork observations are replete with examples of 'techniques of neutralisation' (Sykes and Matza, 1957) but give little support for the contention that petty and meaningful primary deviance has been amplified into more serious hardened delinquency by the process and self-fulfilling prophecy of labelling. Reasons for this include: a) the need to take even one incident of joyriding as potentially hazardous, however meaningful; b) the greater significance of the material constraints of driving bans and high insurance rather than the abstract label 'joyrider' and c) the evidence of resistance to the label, indeed its potentially positive attractions. However, the latter irony is fully in line with the contention of these theorists that social control leads to deviance - though, perhaps more in a Foucauldian sense of producing deviance rather than causing it.

New deviance theory, particularly its British sub-cultural version, placed great emphasis on

resistance by labelled groups but the nearest to a study of joyriding is Willis (1978a) on motorbike culture. His descriptions of that culture's enthusiasm for the motor bike could easily be translated to that of joyriders and the symbolism of the car for them. However, much of that description is of legitimate behaviour and discussion with the 'club'. Willis' work most closely resembles my experience of fieldwork and even reminds me of my own youth club days (late 60s early 70s) when similar activities centred around motor scooters. Willis describes how the club was a centre for spares and 'expert' advice. Advice could be bought for drink or a cigarette. At the motor projects in my field work that mechanical advice and sometimes parts came free. The motor bike and such clubs could, when Willis was writing, be seen as the terrain of a sub-culture. Whilst motor projects might be subcultural and joyriding a minority interest car culture is not 'sub' but 'supra'.

Reviewing developments since the first publication of his classic *Folk Devils and Moral Panics* Stan Cohen notes the mundanity of much delinquency that lead to detention centres and Borstals and fears,

that the obvious fascination with these spectacular subcultures will draw attention away from those more enduring numbers as well as lead to quite inappropriate criticisms of other modes of explanation" (1987: xix).

Joyriding is interesting here because it does form a large part of the mundanity of crime yet historically has attracted so little attention in its own right. Now it has become spectacular it attracts the headline writers yet still attracts only mundane explanations. One reason for this may be that it does not attract the sociologist of deviance looking for resistance. It is a premise of this thesis that in many ways joyriding is a submission not a resistance. Chapter 8 offers readings of car advertising that have been deeply influenced by the semiologies of resistance, but related to uncovering the changing meanings of the car and anxieties around it.

Clearly joyriding could be taken as an example of a moral panic. Cohen predicted their continued generation and Hall *et al* (1978) their hegemonic utility. The media's interest in



joyriding would appear to support this. The empirical material is not available to support the thesis that the panic around joyriding is not only indicative of a crisis of legitimacy around 'law and order' but also indicative of a crisis around the car. The discussion of car advertising in chapter 8 does, however, follow traditions in film studies in assuming that societal anxieties are played out in popular media - fear of communism in 50s sci-fi movies (*Invasion of the Body Snatchers*), fear of sexually-active women (*Fatal Attraction*) and fear of AIDS in more recent vampire films - the empirical evidence, perhaps lies in the growth of direct action against car culture in the form of anti-road protests (also discussed in Chapter 8). Anti-road protestors rather than the rabidly pro-road joyrider are the current folk devil/hero (note the lionisation of Daniel Hooper aka 'Swampy').

Clearly the greatest difficulty comes in the use of Young's paradigms on the subject of Left Idealism. It is his polemical term, used against those who adhere to a Marxism he has long since given up and the anarchism of continental Abolitionist theorists. Given Young's pre-eminence as the theorist of criminological theories his term is used here to describe a broad theoretical strand that like labelling concentrates on criminalisation (often to the extent of being more a sociology of law than a criminology) but without necessarily subscribing to his critique. Indeed strands of abolitionism inform this work as much as Young's realism.<sup>6</sup> Clearly de Haan's contention that 'crime' is a myth which "serves to maintain political power relations" (1991:207) sits uneasily with Young's acceptance of the reality of crime against working class and minority communities and women which will be examined when discussing left realism.

Given the moral and political nature of this position there would be a reluctance to engage with the empirical reality of joyriding to concentrate on the sustenance of the myth and as the discussion of labelling and new deviance suggests there is scope for this. However, the

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6. For instance, I would wholly subscribe to de Haan's (1991:203) description of abolitionism as "based on the moral conviction that social life should not and, in fact cannot, be regulated effectively by criminal law and that, therefore, the role of the criminal justice system should be drastically reduced while other ways of dealing with problematic situations, behaviours and events are being developed and put into practice. Abolitionists regard crime primarily as the result of the social order and are convinced that punishment is not the appropriate reaction."

myths about joyriding when separated out from those about crime more generally do not necessarily tell a single tale. At the height of the events of 1991 and the passing of the Aggravated Vehicle-Taking Act discussed in Chapter 1 myths were to be made and some young men wrote themselves into the script as its hero. Yet some years earlier the myth must have been somewhat different as section 37(1) of the Criminal Justice Act reduced the offence to a summary one and with it the maximum sentence from 3 years to six months. Such 'blips' in the extent, mode and targets of social control require, as de Haan puts it, "not explaining but rather understanding crime as a social event" (1991:208) yet too great a concentration on the mythic aspects or social construction of crime does underplay the 'reality' of crime. Indeed, it is the contention of this thesis that both joyriding and car culture are real problems.

Administrative Criminology is both more and less than the criminology done by the Home Office. It is more because some of its most pragmatic and atheoretical crime prevention elements have been taken up within broader local authority-based community safety projects and are indistinguishable from some left realist interventions in the same field. It is substantially less in that the Home Office itself - under Michael Howard, then Home Secretary - has moved away from its emphasis on primary prevention and reinstituted punishment - general deterrence or incapacitation - as tertiary prevention (Brantingham and Faust, 1976). The major attachment to administrative criminology within current policy is the 'techno fix' of CCTV (Groombridge and Murji, 1994) which is presented as crime prevention but represents the incarceration of the whole of society (Groombridge, 1995a).

Much of the effort expended to prevent car crime discussed in Chapter 1 falls within this paradigm as does much of the literature specifically excluded from Chapter 2. In brief the 'theory' is car crime is opportunist so if the perimetric security (as car adverts put it) is improved and owners reminded to lock their cars by the advertised threat of 'hyenas' (a conservative metaphor) then potential joyriders and stereo thieves are deflected. Within car parks and some high car theft areas CCTV is offered as a solution. In other areas 'police notices' remind

motorists that "car thieves operate in this area".

It is not always easy to differentiate Right Realism from Conservatism in the penal rhetoric of the right but the emphasis on incapacitation and the unlikelihood of remoralising society or offenders are key elements of difference. For right realists their realism consists of recognising the extent of crime and the poor prospects of doing much about it short of widespread, ethically-suspect genetic engineering or politically undesirable social engineering. If larger numbers of the working class and ethnic minorities have to be imprisoned then so be it. The 'three- strikes-and-you're-out' policies of the United States have impacted particularly on street drug dealers and therefore young black men. As yet the turn to the right in UK penal policy appears to concentrate on burglary and sex offences. Any repeat of the events of 1991 might see joyriders added to the list.

Left Realism attempts to move beyond the concentration of the left on the State or the crimes of the powerful and that of the right on punishment by considering not only State, Society and Offender but also the Victim. Indeed it is often most noted for its victim surveys. These surveys suggest a policy-orientation closer to administrative criminology than the theoretical writings of Young would suggest but even so have a wider focus than the victim. Also included are questions on self-reported offending and the performance of police (and, indeed, the local council) as well as broader questions about the environment and its effects on the quality of life. The surveys indicate widespread victimisation and offending associated with cars and often police stops in cars. The theoretical breadth and concerns of left realism clearly offer the opportunity to go beyond the correctionalism or idealism of much criminology in considering joyriding. It remains to be seen whether the emphasis on car culture, masculinities and the environment within this thesis bursts the bounds of left realist criminology or transgresses criminology.

Feminism has been the most transgressive reading of criminology to date leading to radical feminists turning their back on it - for its male-orientation - to work for and with the survivors of



male violence and postmodern feminists (Smart, 1990) turning their back on it for its modernism. As has been discussed in Chapter 4 Cain's (1990a) desire to transgress criminology has been influential upon this study. Indeed in the concluding chapter some thoughts on how the sociology of masculinities (and other disciplines) might prove better or, at least, other ways to 'do criminology'. It is to some of these transgressive possibilities that we turn now.

Postmodernism in criminology is most notable for its arguments with the possibility of criminology - particularly left realism. Its playful deconstructions have proved entertaining (Ferrell and Sanders, 1995) but often unsatisfying. Stanley specifically discusses joyriding (and computer hacking and rave culture) as 'Urban Excess' or 'narratives of dissent in the wild zone' (Stanley, 1996:145). Whilst he cites Henry and Milovanovic his mixture of law, criminology, cultural studies and urban sociology and geography spends too much time celebrating excess. In part this has a gender dimension (see Chapter 7 for discussion). It is also deeply conventional - despite the radically disordered language of the book - in seeing joyriding as part of a syntactical opening up of "new possibilities in consumption" (1996:146). Car manufacturers are themselves engaged in the same activity. Stanley's postmodernism is simply "the cultural logic of late capitalism" (Jameson, 1984). It is agreed that "the 'problems' of hacking, joyriding and raving have been constructed as deviant activities (and therefore available to social control mechanisms)" (1996:149) but this doesn't mean that a choice has to be made simply between either deviance or social control. Both can be criticised. Herein lies the left realism of this text. Joyriding is a 'real' problem but not just because it is a crime or anti-social but because (with road rage - see Chapter 8) it forms part of a larger problem of car use and ownership on a small planet. For these sorts of reasons Henry and Milovanovic (1996) seek to move beyond deconstruction to reconstruction with their 'Constitutive Criminology'. Whether this is post modern or late modern need not detain us here but this and the structured action theories of Giddens - taken up by Messerschmidt (1997) - have been very influential on the readings of car culture.

However, poised between the late modernism of left realism and postmodernism are transgressive spaces which take seriously the reality of crime but deploy non-realist methods or supplement realist methods. These may deploy the methods favoured by Stanley (1996) but require a critical engagement which cannot be provided by postmodernism. Indeed as Nelken (1995:17) notes only the most superficial reading of Baudrillard, Lyotard and Derrida "could take them to be celebrating nihilism. Nor is difficult to detect the transcendent concern for justice."

"Without consent I begin by taking some words that were themselves taken without consent (long ago and far away)" This is how Hartley (1994) starts his article on 'Twoccing and joyreading'. He goes on to argue reading is a low-grade form of theft in which mobility is more important than position. He therefore uses the metaphor of joyriding to argue that texts can be taken for a ride and that even 'on the road' metaphors- criticised within cultural studies as male and patriarchal - can therefore be taken by women.<sup>7</sup> He offers a "reading of actual twoccing - juvenile car crime as covered by the Western Australian press - shows that in the public domain 'society' can be equated with traffic lights, while (it follows) joyriding is subversive of society. I take this to be a suggestive metaphor for reading (1994:399). Interestingly Young, in her own 'outlaw' text, states: 'As an event, crime is thus always already textual, as are the outlaws symbolically excluded from the community' (1996:16).

The full strength of Hartley's argument is contained in the following quotation.

Most familiarly, juveniles twoc cars. But I suggest, readers twoc writings. In both cases the offenders are mobile, travelling for the sake of it, in vehicles not belonging to them, without instrumental purpose. Twoccing requires a moral code at variance with that of possessive individualism; it's an offence to ownership, intellectual or vehicular, being in the end a kind of pure or total gesture of travel, wherein the vehicle, the streets, moving quickly, and being out of time and place are enjoyed for themselves, foregrounding the act and skill of driving (reading), not the possession of a car (text) or the promise of a destination (closure). (1994:400)

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7. Ferrell and Sanders suggest the work of their contributors is "less a finished project than an open road, and we invite you to join us along it" (1995:ix).

Other than recognising the joyreader's 'buzz' at taking a novel vehicle for a spin my comments are reserved for his arguments about joyriding. It is for others to assess the adequacy of his arguments in respect of reading. The critique must therefore start with his assumptions about joyriding.

It may be that, like Humpty Dumpty (in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass*), he means a word to mean what he chooses. In this he is not alone. As the brief discussion in Chapter 1 should indicate the meaning of the word joyriding has changed over time and even today may represent different activities. It is the argument of this thesis that just as it is numerically less than the total figures for car theft or taking without consent it is also much more; how much more will be discussed in the conclusion to this chapter. Hartley sees joyriding as a 'kind of pure or total gesture of travel'. This is a simplification of the complex practice of joyriders as noted in the literature or observed in fieldwork. The motive for joyriding may start with the purity of travel (or the thrill of speed) but it usually ends with the reality of theft of something from the car - and sometimes destruction of it. Indeed most joyriders move from this initial thrill-seeking motive quite quickly to the 'impure' motive of profit. Applying this to Hartley's analogy: very few write for profit; fewer still read for it. Clearly joyriding has meaning - and this thesis seeks the widest possible ones - and therefore gestures may be significant but the gesture in joyriding may not be that of travel but the most fleeting one of ownership and where travel is involved it may be for the same mundane purposes (all red lights obeyed) that puts most motorists on the road, from A to B.

Whilst Hartley is keen to assert "Twoccing (of cars or writings) is not a glamorous crime of cultural politics or personal passion, not epic or heroic; it's a routine, low grade, show-off offence, and as such cannot be romanticised as a form of consumer resistance." (1994:400) his almost Futurist observations about time, place and speed and his disregard for traffic lights suggest that he does regard the joy(rider/reader) as subversive and hence resistant in the best traditions of romantic sub-cultural criminology. Indeed, inverting his contention, such disregard for the rules of the road is not evidence of a 'moral code at variance with possessive



individualism' but evidence of being at one with it. The joyrider, like Toad, is singularly selfish - they think they own the road. But, and this is crucial, he fails to note the significance of his own metaphors.

Red-light jumping is a real problem but it is not solely the preserve of joyriders. It is such a problem in Britain that large numbers of junctions are now policed by fixed cameras dedicated to catching the culprits. The method chosen - photographing and following up the licence number - suggests that the authorities believe it to be mostly a problem of traceable drivers, rather than untraceable ones like joyriders. Much of his argument could be made - and might be better made - not about joyriding but about driving more generally.<sup>8</sup>

It may be that Hartley's particular reading of joyriding derives from his own view of joyreading, it may also derive from the specificity of Australian car culture which offers him a different text on which to work rather than the palimpsest of UK car culture. In suggesting this it is necessary to bracket off discussion of the effects of globalization on local car cultures other than to suggest that the absolute size of country, numbers of cars, miles of road and road traffic and construction and use legislation must mediate global effects.

It is an antipodean synchronicity - that would require comparative work to comprehend - which found Western Australia in November 1991 in "the grip of an orchestrated media campaign" (1994:408) against joyriding and twoccing. It is an indicator of globalization that the same terms are used but of the specificity of the local that "while the campaign was directed against 'juvenile car crime', everyone knew that this meant Aboriginal children's car crimes" (1994:408). In the UK there has been no such understanding. Hartley notes the disproportionate rate of incarceration for Aboriginal juveniles and it may be an underdog identification that leads him to see Aboriginal joyriding in these terms:

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8. It is not relevant to the argument here that I enjoyed, and found persuasive, his 'reading' of Thor Heyerdahl's 'scientific' expeditions as travel punctuated with "wheelies in a balsa boat, and handbrake turns with a reed boat" (1994:403).

...the weakness and dispossession of a few dozen Aboriginal minors and their mates was not seen as weak at all when they turned to twoccing and joyriding into class war; it was treated as a threat to law (and order), and it mobilised the full array of Repressive State Apparatuses, cheered by the local press, talk-back radio and TV news. (1994:410)

The history of the car and of joyriding set out in Chapter 1 and the literature in Chapter 2 does suggest not just that joyriding has got worse but that the tolerance that once called it joyriding is no longer exercised. A similar trajectory can be seen in connection with drunk driving over the past twenty years. Driving drunk was once seen to be socially acceptable but no longer is. It may be that other aspects of car use will become censured in this fashion. Indeed the car itself has come under increased critical gaze because of green pressure and the reality of car-induced respiratory problems and traffic congestion. Some of these issues are discussed more fully in Chapter 8. Here they are raised to indicate that joyriders - and joyriding - cannot be viewed as careering about a statically conceived town and countryside. Not only have numbers of cars on the roads increased but the use made of them has changed from that of upper-class leisure to essential mobility. The car's status as an economic positional good has changed to that of 'dispositional' good bordering on the disposable.

These changes in car use and the increased regulation of car use mean that not only is joyriding seen to be more dangerous and threatening than previously but all traffic violations are subject to greater scrutiny. It is less easy to imagine Ross (1968) being able to argue that such violations were a 'folk crime' though many offenders would see themselves in this way. His speculative propositions on folk crime are worth noting in full:

- (a) Major increments to the complexity of a society, of which the *automobile* is a technological example, create a need for regulation where none was previously necessary.
- (b) Legislation to regulate the conditions brought about by increasing complexity reclassifies certain prevalent non-criminal behaviour as crime.
- (c) Especially where the harmful effect of the proscribed behaviour is indirect or improbable in most instances, the novel legislation may not be related to previously existing norms.
- (d) Criminal behaviour in folk crime is rooted, not necessarily in lower-class culture, but in the culture of groups most affected by the social or

technological changes that the legislation attempts to control. White-collar crime is the special case of folk crime resulting from legislation regulating business and finance. The *automobile*, with its impact on all social classes, generates more pervasive folk crime.

- (e) In particular instances, large numbers of people including those of high status, will be involved in law violations related to major social changes.
- (f) The lack of congruence between the new laws and established mores, the generally higher status of the violators, and the possibly larger size of the group of violators among the total population, will tend to be associated with preferential treatment of folk criminals in the public image and in the judicial process. (1968:171 emphasis added)

Ross was talking about legal attitudes to traffic violation and white-collar crime but much of what he says was true of wider attitudes to joyriding. Today many drivers still believe themselves to be illegitimate targets of police activity; young joyriders hold parallel views.

Joyriding is not just an ongoing problem associated with the car and driving but is integral to the transgressive project of the car. Modern joyriding is the unwanted echo, the 'evil twin' who is denied, of 'responsible' motoring. Compare these quotes: "In joy-rides, however, the Poplar boys never took girls along, because 'It'd be wrong to risk anybody except yourselves.'" with "I think I tend to be more risky when I'm on my own because I don't feel responsible for others". The first quote is that of a young joyrider - a respondent to Downes (1966:205) - whereas the second is from an AA study (1992:40) from a 'safe' 18 year old driver of his own car.<sup>9</sup>

### Conclusion - what do I mean by joyriding?

The brief discussion in Chapter 1 and the literature discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 suggests that the term joyriding not only has no legal meaning but no fixed popular meaning. Its meaning has changed over time yet retains some of the old meanings too and is given new meanings in work such as Hartley's discussed above and in the conclusion to this chapter.

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9. 'Safe' in as much as judged to be safe by a professional driving instructor after a 40 kilometre driving 'test'.



The earlier discussion of theoretical paradigms at the beginning of this chapter and the empirical work discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 illustrates the limited extent to which they can or have attempted to explain joyriding.

If joyriding is treated as purely criminal then most criminological theories can claim to get some purchase on the subject yet would each criticize the others deficiencies and feminism would rightly point out the failure of all to explain the overwhelming male involvement. Left realism would offer the best hope of explaining joyriding as crime: the interactions between offender, society and state and the impact on victims. However, in its ongoing concern for etiology left realism does owe a debt to sociological positivism. Yet the mid-range theory of Currie (1997) with its concentration on market society might encompass joyriding as deriving from (or at least, in Currie's pharmacological metaphor, 'potentiated' by) the marketing of violent technologies (though he has the gun in mind).

Building on Mertonian and Albert Cohen's ideas of strain it is possible to see that the twin demands of finding a place within masculinity and within car culture some will 'innovate' by stealing cars and others 'ritualise' by obsessive consumption of car magazines and facts - to become a 'carspotter', an 'anorak'. In considering the 'retreatist' and 'rebellious' adaptations to these strains it becomes clear that the innovative and ritualised adaptations are in practice flip-sides of car culture and often in the field cannot be distinguished. Moreover, together they represent an acceptance of and a deep psychic drive to assimilate to that culture. Merton saw the American Dream as the source of strain. Cohen's work (reviewed briefly in Chapter 2 and more extensively in Chapter 7) suggests masculinity as a source of strain for middle-class boys. Other structures, ideologies and questions of identity also provide sites of strain, not all of these will intersect with car culture. So, lodged within left realism a multi-causal strain theory could explain joyriding as a crime. Yet without denying the 'reality' of joyriding and car crime it seems clear that joyriding is more than a crime. It speaks also of car culture and of masculinities.

Such are the homologies between joyriding as described in the literature and conventional driving - including the gender issues - it has been necessary to take one point of the square of crime - that of society, recast here as car culture - and stretch it into areas that are not crime. This has involved a transgression of criminology and a dissolving of disciplinary boundaries between it and cultural studies and the sociology of masculinities. This represents my own academic joyriding - taking and driving away theories without consent. Wolff (1993:234) makes the point that "The already-gendered language of mobility marginalizes women who want to participate in cultural criticism" and that just as women enter 'town' men get 'on the road' taking their theory and identity with them. Thus my own academic joyriding may be indicative of my own subordinated masculinity rebelling against empirical method.

Before taking off to the wilder shores let us revisit the legal definition. The first thing to note is it is the Theft Act 1968 (and amendments to it) that is brought to bear on joyriding not a Road Traffic Act yet the statistics also appear in summaries of motoring offences. The earliest usages of the word joyriding concentrate on the fun and the earliest recorded practices suggest some of that or short- term transportation (either to get home or to experience driving). These usages and practices continue today.

Analysis of media and ministerial moralising suggest that the main elements are dangerous driving and confrontation with the police. Again the literature and fieldwork observation provide plenty of evidence that this too forms part of the current practice of joyriding. Moreover, necessarily involved in any of these forms of joyriding are the 'paper' offences concerning tax, insurance and licenses. The need for documents involves considerable financial outlay and increasing skills in comparison to which the cost of acquiring a car - even legally - can be small. These provide an effective deterrent to many from legally acquiring a car and gives no guarantee that those who succeed in this obstacle race will drive any better than joyriders (AA, 1992; 'road rage', 'motorway madness', drunk driving etc). A critical inversion would be to call all such anti-social expressive car use joyriding too.

It may also be useful to consider that just as the need for 'papers' tempts many to drive illegally so age limits on driving also presents a temptation to drive before the legal age. Even where the money for insurance, tax and the necessary skill to obtain a licence are present an unavoidable hurdle is that of age.<sup>10</sup> Whilst driving is not illegal it is hedged around by enormous and increasing numbers of regulations; one's status is important. Have you tax, insurance and license? Are you sober? Does the vehicle have an MOT and does it meet the use and construction regulations and exhaust emission standards. However, the crucial status for starting this paper chase is age. A major factor in taking cars without consent is age. As is the case with sex it is not possible to give or receive consent to drive under age. For both sex and car use, the age limit is absolute - though different - whereas that for pub-going is more complex and dependent upon the situation.<sup>11</sup> These different age limits on otherwise legal practices - and others, for example, those on the age of criminal responsibility - invite offending by those unaware of them or antipathetic to them. It may seem tautologous to refer to joydrinking or joysex but these too are widely indulged in with many personal risks akin to joyriding. It may be that joyriding rankles so much with authority because of the youth of its practitioners.

To recap then. Joyriding is theft or taking of a car without consent. It is 'borrowing' a car for fun or to get home. It may involve dangerous, provocative or confrontational driving. Much of the same behaviour can be seen in car driving more generally but the term joyriding tends to be reserved for the young. So joyriding might usefully be compared to other status offences like sex and drink but also to other illegal driving behaviours - whether 'paper' or road - and all driving. In this I am with Ruggiero (1996), Taylor (1997) and Hobbs (1997). Hobbs's discussion of the mythic status of the Underworld suggests to him that, "the organisation of

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10. See Smerdon (1994) for examples of drivers driving their own cars but without insurance often in breach of a disqualification. Their justifications sound similar to those given by joyriders. For them, it is mounting fines, periods of disqualification and prohibitive insurance cover rather than age which denies them the appropriate status.

11. Going into licensed premises accompanied, 14, yet 18 to buy own drink at bar with age 16 for drinking with a meal. 16 for heterosexual; 17 for car driving and 18 for male homosexual.



criminal labour mirrors trends in the organisation of legitimate labour" (1997:66) and cites Ruggiero and South (forthcoming). Reviewing Hobbs book length treatment of the subject, Ruggiero says this of the chapter on hedonism and crime,

his analysis challenges aetiological approaches hinging on poverty, disadvantage and social inadequacy, which seems to identify crime with practices exclusively adopted by powerless individuals. (1997:303)

Taylor notes Ruggiero's "strong challenge" (1997:299) to 'the aetiology of deficit'. Hobbs is talking of professional crime and Ruggiero of the criminality of conventional business and politics. Clearly joyriding is of a different order but Parker (1974b) noted the conventionality of the desire to joyride and the similarities noted between descriptions of joyriding and other risky driving (the daily experience of motorists) dissolve the under/over world or sub-culture/culture divisions of much correctional and appreciative criminology. Yes, the joyriders discussed in much of the literature and observed in the field suffer a deficit. They are multiply deprived. They have few jobs or prospects, lack cars, crucially lack sufficient age for legal driving and, once caught and processed, lack the 'paper' qualifications to drive. Yet these are not taken to be factors - that they may be is not denied - the point here is to make connections to concentrate on the conventionality, the mundanity of joyriding. Particularly the connections are made to hegemonic and other masculinities - including those of criminal justice personnel and criminologists - and to the nearly congruent car culture and society.

Just as Hartley (1994) suggests the act of reading (and, I would suggest, writing) is an act of theft so Hebdige (1979) reads the moment of punk with the help of Barthes as a symbolic repossession of everyday objects within a Gramscian framework of hegemonic struggle. He goes to extraordinary lengths to show that punk use of Nazi insignia is subversive and, possibly, even anti-racist. Punk appeared to challenge conventionality. Following Parker I see joyriding as conventional yet using some of the methods of Hebdige want to read the extent to which convention is subversive. If I were to follow Hebdige's methods totally (or even those of more marxist writers on sub-cultures like those included in *Resistance Through Rituals*) then the emphasis might be on how joyriders use of cars gives a meaning to them that runs

counter to conventionality. Indeed it is possible to imagine a green direct action campaign that removed cars from the road by taking them without consent. Such a political action could easily be called joyriding to criminalise it and the legal action would be exactly the same - except with conspiracy charges thrown in? However, there is no suggestion in the literature or fieldwork observations that there is a green motive. The nearest that joyriders come to such political action - and then only as "deconstructed, demystified by a 'mythologist' like Barthes" (Hebdige, 1979:16) - is in setting fire to cars once finished with. The explanation furnished by the police for that - and not denied by joyriders - is the removal of evidence. A mythologist might also suggest that it represents an ambivalence towards the car. As Downes said of the joyrider he "soon realises the falsity of the need and discards it" (1966:204). A simpler suggestion still is that (c)arson, like joyriding, is easy and fun to do.

This emphasis on reading, deconstructing and demythologising the conventional use of cars which is taken up in Chapters 7 and 8 is not intended to diminish the dangers of joyriding but to set it in the context of car culture which, though conventional, is highly contested but not by joyriders. Where joyriding is read and deconstructed it is to return it to its conventional garage; to emphasize similarity not difference. The stylish sub-cultural hero takes the culturally given without consent (car, swastika or text) and reassembles it through a process of *bricolage* but the car is resistant to being taken in this way because it has not been taken and driven away by joyriders but has (always) already been stolen by other joyriders. The joyriders of both text and cars are the advertisers and film-makers who - possibly influenced in Art College by Hebdige - have taken the car, thrown handbrake turns and so far eluded capture. So to add to the definitions of joyriding discussed earlier must be added cinematic and advertising media joyriding - where cars (mundane industrial products with low use and exchange values) are taken and glamourised.

To conclude joyriding is mundane, joyriders are mundanely conventional car users, conventional car use is mundane - though enormously influential. Its banality is represented by joyriders; it's spectacle maintained by textual joyriders.

## CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS: MOTOR PROJECTS

If it diverts one persistent offender it must reduce car crime to a degree

(Respondent X, in Groombridge, 1994)

Chapter 2 reviewed the few studies and evaluations of motor projects. In this Chapter the discussion of the literature on motor projects discussed in Chapter 2 is analysed with specific reference to the fieldwork at two motor projects and contacts with and documents from others. The difficulties that faced Martin and Webster (1994) about the definition of a motor project reflect the reality on the ground - apparently similar projects are very different. The reasons for these differences sometimes reflect the harsh realities of funding but those realities themselves often reflect a deeper underlying problem. That problem is the taken-for-granted, never-asked assumption that motor projects work without any clear idea how they might work.<sup>1</sup>

The bulk of the chapter is a discussion of what motor projects are for, drawing on the work of Jones (1993), and how whether they work might be examined, drawing on the work of Pawson and Tilley (1994). Finally the issue of how motor projects might work is examined. Throughout the discussion is informed by visits to and observations at motor projects and reference made to interviews and questionnaires. Some of this is set out prior to the conclusion. First, though, the heuristic device of examining some myths about motor projects is used to set the scene.

The myth that all motor projects are 'banger' projects is quite persistent. If the related myth that 'Banger' projects are all about racing is also believed this will certainly lead the public, media and sentencers to see the project as a 'treat for naughty boys'. It is a myth though. In the membership of the National Association of Motor Projects and outside it there is a wide variety

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1. This is not unusual in the penological field. Much of the argument about whether prison works derives from its organic growth and the mixed motives of its promoters and reformers let alone any latent functions it is seen to have.



of projects; some will be banger projects others will attempt to deal with car crime through group work involving no use of cars at all (Martin and Webster, 1994). Whether these might be better described as car education projects is a real issue that will be picked up later.

TRAX, for instance, race bangers but their DIAL and Car Crime Programme involve no driving. The COP programme run in Liverpool does allow some driving at a separate motor project in the last couple of sessions by way of reward (Chapter 2 and Goldson, 1996). The TRAX Car Crime Programme and the Bradford Motor Education Project place the emphasis on mechanical work. The National Protocol for Youth Justice Services has this to say about 'auto-crime projects':

Auto-crime projects have proved to be effective in addressing offending behaviour in relation to the taking of motor vehicles. Projects should provide instruction on mechanics, road safety and opportunities to drive vehicles in a controlled and safe legal environment. Opportunities to drive should be dependent on full participation in the programme. (1996:22-23)

In Autosport terms many projects race not 'bangers' but Minis or karts. Bradford Motor Education Project race bangers but also use, but do not race, a self-built hovercraft. Wolverhampton Wheelspin uses karts and cars but also motor bikes and mountain bikes in their work. Other projects offer driving lessons. The Driver Retraining Scheme (Harraway 1986) was a scheme started by ILPS Demonstration Unit for TDA offenders at Highbury and Islington Magistrates Court in the early 80s. No disqualification was made and no requirement added to the probation order but eight points were given towards disqualification. Offenders agreed to pay for their own driving lessons and test. In 20 months there were 132 referrals, 80 signed up and were accepted for the scheme, 66 started and 18 reoffended during course, 33% after 1 year and 53% after two years. 30 signed up for the driving test, 21 took it and 12 passed. It is significant that those attending the scheme had to pay for their own lessons, though loans were given. Other projects that have paid for lessons have usually had to endure a media storm of disapproval, sometimes based on inaccurate information (*Carweek* article on TRAX) or because of an earlier press interest ('Safari Boy given free driving lessons' *The Times* 29 March 1994).

The 'Banger projects are all about racing' myth can take a number of forms. On the one hand the media or sentencers may assume that all that goes on at motor projects is racing or preparation for racing so may not see projects as sufficiently punitive. On the other hand social workers or probation officers may not see the projects as providing sufficient social work input or work on offending behaviour. The argument is how can an activity that is so close to joyriding have an impact on joyriding? Afterall no other crime is treated in this 'homeopathic' way. Sex offenders are either punished or treated not given sex. The totally opposite point of view is that only something as exciting as banger (or other) racing can possibly work with a crime so exciting as joyriding. The arguments therefore boil down to these oppositions which might be termed 'puritanical' and 'homeopathic' respectively: Motor projects should not work on joyriding through racing because it is indistinguishable from it or; Joyriding is so exciting that only racing can work.

Both the puritanical and homeopathic arguments are faulty. Though all motor projects are not banger projects, as has already been explained, some are or have elements of banger or other racing. In reality how exciting are they and how much time does that leave for social work?

Banger racing like all Autosports is hedged round with technical rules to ensure fair competition and the health and safety of competitors and spectators. It is exciting and noisy to watch; exciting, noisy and dirty to compete in. It is also very scary, involves long moments of boredom and attention to detail. Moreover, a race may have only just started before it is finished for the driver because of mechanical failure or a crash as Pearce and Thornton (1980) noted (and I frequently observed in fieldwork). Young and inexperienced drivers also discover that they are not as good drivers as they think as those studied by Briggs (1991) showed.

Not only can the actuality of racing therefore be considerably less exciting than might appear to be the case, that excitement usually has to be worked for. At both TRAX and the Ilderton Motor Project drives are the subject of rosters. Bad behaviour or poor attendance can lead to

the loss of a drive. There is considerable effort expended in preparing the cars. Opportunities to race may be many weeks apart and the race programme is seasonal so during the winter there is more work with less immediate reward.

Working on the cars often requires team work. Many projects appoint team leaders. Informal social work is often carried out in this time or during cigarette or chip breaks. Even racing-orientated projects can build in more formal opportunities for social work interventions. For instance, it is a condition of attending the Ilderton Project that members attend the Wednesday evening session where a good hour is spent on group issues. This may involve resolving simmering disputes or even mutual social control where someone's wrongdoing is dealt with by the group using punishments like cleaning the toilets, missing drives or expulsion.

Racing, however, does remain central to many projects. NAMP runs championships for member projects. For instance, the TRAX Project Managers First Report to the Management Committee (undated but presumably April '93) concentrated on racing. The report covered the first nine months operation of TRAX and is the first substantive comment on the operation of the project. After an introductory paragraph the second and third paragraphs concentrate on racing. The emphasis is on competition (two second, two thirds). Only one event had been entered at that time but they had also been Kart racing and ice Kart racing. Many projects also race at commercial venues. Ilderton hold licences that allow them to race against all-comers at Wimbledon Stadium. A friendly rivalry exists between TRAX and Ilderton.

So racing exists but is not as exciting as it might seem to outsiders and allows time for social work. Indeed motor projects may not be exciting enough to attract some joyriders. Certainly some committed drivers may find that the social work elements or, even, the requirement to do mechanics or painting - on 'your' car or others - too onerous. Any penal sanction or welfare intervention is only likely to work if the offender is receptive. If a young offender is taking ten cars a week (not unknown) then a drive of only a few minutes once a month cannot be



equivalent.

Hudson argues that social welfare values and practice often reinforce and collude with conceptions of 'appropriate' youthful masculinity. She had in mind the tendency of youth work interventions (Intermediate Treatment specifically) to meet youthful male offending with equally macho activities such as outdoor pursuits. She also notes the good work that many men have done in these projects but suggests a specific attraction of male social workers towards the more macho activities:

There is a paradox in the maleness of motor projects: on the one hand the meaning of male delinquency is congruent with society's agenda for adolescent masculinity, but on the other the state punishes this particular form of male expression (particularly that by black and working class youth) by even greater doses of 'macho' medicine. (Hudson, 1988:35)

Hudson remarks specifically of TWOC, "delinquency is partly powered by a sexuality-focused and societally stimulated dynamic." (1988:37)

So just as some sentencers may see motor projects as treats for boys some female and anti-sexist male social workers or probation officers may see motor projects as toys for boys ie not just a treat but a specifically male treat. The punitive morality of the right may be matched by the politically correct morality of the left. For example, writing in the radical men's magazine *Achilles Heel*, Jackson (1992) writes about the hypocrisy of the headline writers reactions to joyriding and speaks sympathetically, perhaps romantically, of joyriders who "seize these symbols of middle-class authority and power" but roundly condemns motor projects in these terms, "Go-kart racing schemes or police invitations to young men to handle fast performance cars in controlled situations are like inviting alcoholics to a brewery." (p38) Or, Buckley and Young (1996:66) "...significant questions seemingly remain about work which involves activities which replicate the speed and excitement - the buzz - of risky driving."

There is no doubt that motor projects are very male places. They are more like garages than settings for social work intervention or punishment. The sociology of the workplace or of

organisations or even management studies might be appropriate ways to study them. The enthusiasts of racing have not yet taken on board gender issues though some of these were raised in an article by Groombridge (1993a). The Annual Conference of NAMP has not discussed gender issues during the course of the research but amongst those attending it is a live subject (numerous personal communications). Indeed two projects just opened in London (Walthamstow and Tower Hamlets/Hackney) are keen to address the issue in their work. The Turas Project in Belfast is a detached youth project working with joyriders which is keen to work not only with the joyrider but the mothers and partners who may actually lose out if the house rather than the street is to be his arena.

The Ilderton Project has certainly had a young woman attend. The TRAX project did work with a Special Unit which meant that a number of young women were attending sessions for nearly a year (though separate to the TRAX evening sessions). TRAX now have one woman staff member. Most motor projects have women on the Management Committee and certainly TRAX and Telford DRIVE Motor Projects owe much to women founders. Both Bradford and Brixton Motor Projects run sessions for young women.

It is not enough to argue that since car crime is almost exclusively male and motor projects are for car crime it is no surprise that they are full of men and generate a male atmosphere; and that if there were more female joyriders they would provide women-friendly services. Moreover, just adding a woman staff member, sessions for young women or posting up an equal opportunities policy statement does not address these issues, though they are to be welcomed on equal opportunities grounds. Even in an all male setting gender issues should be dealt with.

There is a myth that motor projects are for high risk car crime offenders only. Some of the measures that probation-associated motor projects use to judge the success of their programmes is the extent to which Pre-Sentence Report writers target serious car offenders. There are related policy and economic reasons for this. Home Office guidelines backed by



National Standards and legislation (particularly the Criminal Justice Act 1991) have required the probation service to seek increasingly to work with serious offenders; to provide community penalties of sufficient severity leaving prison only for the most serious offenders (particularly violent and sexual offenders). Moreover, the various meta-analyses of 'What Works' indicate that programmes work best with those at serious risk of custody. To encourage this the Home Office awarded grants to voluntary projects such as TRAX under what became called the Home Office Supervision Grant Scheme. The expectation was that the grant scheme would 'save prison places'. Projects receiving funds were expected to concentrate on serious offenders rather than less serious offenders or those 'at risk' and certainly not for 'drop in' services. It might be seen as the young adult offenders equivalent of Intermediate Treatment which had been the subject of a Department of Health and Social Security initiative.

The 'just deserts' ethos of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 did not survive a year before key sections were amended and the whole Criminal Justice System realigned with a more retributive project. Additional to this legislative change was an administrative change. The money formerly disbursed under the Supervision Grant Scheme is now devolved to local probation services; subject to the proviso that 5% of the probation service's budget is spent on projects in the 'independent' sector. Projects are therefore judged against other ways of spending the money locally, and may even find they have private sector competition.

It is still not clear what the precise outcome of the incoming Government's plans for criminal justice will be but it seems likely that the probation service will continue to target serious offenders if only to try and keep them out of prison.

The move to local control brings in its train closer scrutiny. The suspicion in the Home Office was that whilst grant schemes (for supervision and the provision of accommodation) required the involvement of the local probation service (Chief Probation Officer approval, committee membership and liaison arrangements) the view taken locally was that the more resources the



better as long as they were paid for by the Home Office; projects need only be a 'good idea' or useful. Now they will need to provide value for money - to be efficient, effective and economical.

Motor projects have particular difficulties with this. They can be capital and labour intensive and can only expect to work with small numbers. Moreover, such is the attraction and ease of stealing cars that Motor Projects can only fail if a short-term and abstentionist test of their value is applied. Arguing that Motor Projects, or any other community penalty, is cheaper than prison cuts little ice with the Home Office even though it controls both budgets. The capital and labour costs of prisons are such that only a scheme, or combination of schemes, that could promise the closure of at least a whole wing could argue that it deserved to receive money that otherwise went to prisons. There is an administrative/constitutional problem too. Money voted by Parliament for one thing is difficult to vire from one vote to another.<sup>2</sup>

A contradictory myth is that motor projects are for low risk car crime offenders comes about because of the different definitions of motor projects. Thus motor project in the previous section meant one associated with community penalties whereas in this section it means crime prevention or diversion from the criminal justice system. Of nineteen respondents (three magistrates, four social workers and twelve probation officers) twelve saw TRAX as court-based or offender-orientated but only six saw it solely in those terms - five probation officers and one social worker (Groombridge, 1994). The realities of funding push some projects towards working with those in danger of imprisonment but the inclinations of many though are to work with those who are 'at risk' or on the periphery of offending. One practical reason for this, rather than a distaste for working in or with the criminal justice system, is the findings on joyriding (Light *et al* 1993, McCorry and Morrissey 1989) that there is a career ladder where joyriders move quickly from acting as look outs, to being carried, to stealing cars

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2. It is for this reason that Oxfordshire Probation Service have been unable to promise TRAX funding beyond the expiry of Home Office funding next year. Unusually the Ilderton Motor Project has never been funded by Home Office grants but by the Probation Service directly for its probation work.

for fun and on to stealing cars for profit.

In the light of the myth that motor projects are for joyriders only some motor projects actively exclude those who are not joyriders or motoring offenders. Where they are aligned to very specific 'tackling-offending-behaviour' programmes this seems reasonable, but, if motor projects work for joyriders might they not also work for other offenders? Wilkinson and Morgan's (1995) work opens up this possibility. To answer that question, however, not only requires a knowledge of whether motor projects work but how they work. The purpose here is to suggest that - given the confidence of projects that they do work with joyriders - consideration should be given to whether they might also work with other offenders. The question of whether they do work and how they do so is examined later.

One immediate objection would be that motor projects have more than enough work to do without trying to squeeze in other offenders. Another would be the concern that non-joyriding offenders might 'learn' to become joyriders. This, however, is also an argument against prison. There is certainly anecdotal evidence (confirmed in fieldwork) that car thieves who before prison felt only able to steal certain makes of car broadened their skills. Learning may also go the other way. Joyriders may learn to become house burglars. If money has become their main motivation this may be the case. Whilst no better as a criminal justice outcome and distressing to the victim, burglary does not carry the dangers that joyriding does.

Motor projects must work on issues other than car crime. Even if those attending have been sent because of car crime there is no guarantee that they are not also burglars or drug users. Joyriding may be quite a singular activity but away from the driving wheel they have all the same problems as their peers; very few would 'solve' them solely through car-related crime. So the distinction between those who are joyriders and those who are not is false. Some studies of joyriding have suggested a degree of specialism (Gibbens 1958; Gibbons 1977; Light *et al*, 1993 and Wattenberg and Balistrieri 1952) and some joyriders in Belfast seek to distinguish themselves from both 'the hoods' (real criminals) and the paramilitaries



(McCullough and Schmidt 1990). There have also been attempts to distinguish motoring offenders from 'criminals' (Hood 1972; Kriefman 1975; Steer and Carr-Hill 1967 and Willett 1964). Comparisons are difficult because different definitions are used. This may be because motoring offences are so common amongst all sections of the population that there is an unwillingness to see those activities as indicative of criminality though illegal. A more useful criterion may therefore be to ask whether the 'offender' or person 'at risk' is interested in cars.

The purpose of this discussion has been to raise the suggestion that motor projects might also be used for other offenders, whatever their offence, provided they are interested in cars. In short motor projects might not be thought of as somewhere to send car criminals but a way of working with offenders in its own right.

In order to build on some of the issues raised in examining these myths it is necessary to examine the purpose of motor projects more critically by looking at the work of Jones (1993). Jones asks if motor projects are the answer to car crime why are shoplifters not sentenced to stack shelves? He does not conclude that motor projects are of no use or that shoplifters should stack shelves but emphasises the need for careful analysis of the nature of car theft by young people, the best means of prevention, and of sentencing those found guilty, of an offence of unlawful taking and driving away.

Jones (1993) draws on his experience of working for the Intermediate Treatment Fund (ITF) during which time he considered applications from over a hundred motor projects for funding.<sup>3</sup> He reports most had no clear idea of what it was they wanted to do beyond 'keeping them off the streets'. Whilst he recognises that such youth work or provision may be valuable in itself he makes it clear that motor projects need to offer something more if they are to justify their existence, prove their worth, and avoid being condemned by failing to meet the expectations they generate. That is motor projects need to be clear not only what it is that they wanted to do but remember the promises they may have made or expectations

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3. The ITF is now the Divert Trust.



unrealistically raised amongst users, social and probation services, sentencers, funders and the community.

Jones (1993) notes the paucity of research into the effectiveness of motor projects and doubts the claim (rightly as no details were given of methodology) by the Home Office Standing Conference on Crime Prevention that only 100 young people reoffended out of 4,500 attending Motor Projects. Moreover, he opines that research will continue to offer little until projects are clear which particular type of offender they are addressing. He also accepts the gender imbalance in car theft and legal car use but does not ask why.

Unlike many commentators he recognises that cars are not just means of transportation but status symbols and even extensions to our personality and given the range of functions fulfilled by cars in our modern society, motor projects could only scratch the surface of the social problem of car theft by young men. He suggests a typology of car theft by under-age youth and explores whether motor projects are likely to be relevant sentences or diversionary activities for young people within each section of the typology.

Jones recognises that his typology, like all typologies, has limitations. There are overlaps but he hopes that the typology, will help motor projects, sentencers and politicians to be clearer as to the type of service motor projects should be offering and the suitability of particular young people for the programmes. The typology is set out in table 6.1 and discussed below.

Table 6.1 Jones (1993) typology of car thieves and their suitability for Motor Projects (adapted from Jones (1993))

Type	Description	Suitable for Motor Project?
1	The joyrider	'ill-equipped'
2	The peaceful illegal driver	'could prevent re-offending'
3	The Traveller	'not appropriate'
4	The Motor fanatic	'ideal'
5	The bored opportunist	maybe
6	The relatively deprived driver	'motor projects have nothing to offer'

As will be seen there are reasons to take issue with the typology and Jones (1993) prescriptions but first it should be recognised that his typology, like others in the literature, is criminological not legal. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The disadvantages are that all the behaviour described is illegal whether straight theft, taking without the owner's consent or Aggravated Vehicle-Taking plus all the 'paper' offences associated with them. Sentencers and potential referrers to motor projects are obliged to consider the legal not the criminological issues. The circumstances and motivations might come out in proceedings, interviews or reports but charge and/or conviction does not follow Jones', or any other, typology.

The advantage is that because it does not follow the legal code it places the emphasis on what the car thief did, what it means to them and what might work with them. This should make sense to social workers and probation officers. It certainly informs their work and the Reports they make to sentencers. One of the reasons that Jones does not think that motor projects will work with some of his types may be that he subscribes to some myths about motor projects himself. Whilst he breaks down the types of car thief into six types he assumes a single type of motor project. Set out below is a synopsis of Jones typology with critical commentary.

The joyrider is the young man who regularly steals cars for the illegal thrill of it. Jones equates joyriding with displaying and mentions Blackbird Leys Estate as a prime example but wrongly claims that the whole estate turned out to watch (fieldnotes). The research discussed in Chapter 2 shows that most takers of cars start because of the buzz even if they continue because of the living to be made from car crime. Jones sees motor projects as ill-equipped to deal with such offenders because they cannot compete with the thrill of joyriding, the very legality of motor projects being a disincentive. This assumes that only thrills will work. These would be arguments against prison and for power boat racing, white-knuckle rides or bungee jumping as community penalties or crime prevention.

His argument about the legality of motor projects being a disincentive assumes that part of the buzz is the illegality of joyriding. This is a debatable; illegality may contribute to the fun but it is not the fun. Neither does it explain why a particular form of car use is chosen. The question that needs to be asked in a criminological discussion of joyriding is: is it the stealing of the car that constitutes joyriding or the particular style of driving? The law does not recognize joyriding (even if the Aggravated Vehicle-Taking Act was prompted by it). It is the taking without consent that constitutes the offence. For the media and the general public the focus is on the way the cars are driven (spectacularly) and eventually left (burnt-out). Even though joyriders are more likely to call their activity twocing - indicating the strength of the criminal justice discourse - it is primarily the fun - the joy - that motivates them.

If the argument above is accepted then motor projects might be able to work with Jones' (1993) 'joyrider' type not by providing something equally thrilling but by providing genuine alternatives. This is the purpose of the non-workshop sessions in the TRAX Car Crime Programme; the Wednesday night meeting at Ilderton or the whole of Merseyside's COP (Goldson, 1996). If joyriders still need to do something illegal then there are other opportunities. Drug use is widespread amongst young people and the question arises is it the illegality or the fun? To argue that part of the fun of offending is the breaking of the law is no more profound than its inversion - that fun things are made illegal.

According to Jones the peaceful illegal driver gets a thrill from just driving a car. They'll drive it carefully all day abandoning it when it runs out of petrol. This is a form of joyriding that used to be more common. It may still be common but the legal/media focus has been on the more spectacular displaying. So great has the focus been on displaying that the possibility that joyriders might be able to drive well is near heretical.

Jones feels that motor projects that offer legitimate driving rather than racing or mechanics could prevent reoffending in this type. The DIAL programme at TRAX or the Telford Motoring Offenders Education Project (Hutchins 1993) could be seen as part of this process. A



difficulty arises with this group of offenders in encouraging self-referral; catching such an offender or persuading a sentencer that the offence is sufficiently serious to warrant motor project time.

The Traveller is very much like McCaghy *et al*'s (1977) 'short-term transportation'. The typical case is to get home after the close of public transport. Jones tells of a young man placed in residential care 60 miles from home using cars solely for the purpose of getting home. He says motor projects are not appropriate in these cases but better public transport might. However, whilst it is clear that some young men steal cars for this purpose it is less clear that they would use public transport. Public transport is low status. It is the transport of those without choice; cars are a dream of choice. So the motivation may be travelling but the choice of car is instructive.

Like some of the other types the common thread is the car and young men's relation to it. It is possible to conceive of a motor project which may or may not use cars but directs its attention to the relation of offenders and non-offenders to the car as many projects have sessions on this issue. Just as projects for violent men go through the argument about whether the staff, or even the Management Committee, should be all male - acknowledging the need for men to take responsibility for men's violence - or all female to prevent male collusion (for example Potts, 1996). If the collusion argument were accepted there would be a demand for female non-drivers to staff such programmes. Female non-drivers would be easier to find than male but non-driving social workers or probation officers male or female are few.

For Jones the Motor fanatics are young men and adults fascinated by cars who enjoy tinkering with cars. Accordingly they may steal motor cars as the only way they can pursue this interest. Jones sees motor projects as ideal for young men and adults fascinated by cars. His contention that they might steal them because of this seems not to be supported by the evidence of the previously quoted research which suggests that reasons given for joyriding are, initially, the buzz and, later, the opportunity for profit. It is clear from visits to projects and

the results of questionnaires that many are mad about cars. It should also be noted that many of those who work for Motor Projects are mad about cars too. There are also a vast number of motor fanatics in the general male population - witness the 10,000 who turned up to watch Nigel Mansell practice on his recent return to Formula 1 from Indy Car Racing, the numbers of car magazines which rival those of "men's" magazines and the turn out for the funeral of Ayrton Senna - a small memorial to whom, handwritten on the office whiteboard, appeared at TRAX immediately after his death (fieldnotes).

Jones notes a great deal of car theft - and other crime- is committed by young people who are simply bored. He distinguishes these bored opportunists from the 'real' joyriders of type 1. The Home Office's Working Group concentrated entirely on 'opportunistic car crime' which they defined as a) theft or b) unauthorized taking away and c) theft from a vehicle by a person with no pre-conceived idea of theft who takes advantage of an opportunity such as being unlocked or easily/safely effecting an entry.

Better car security is the main means to prevent opportunist theft. Jones notes that a motor project may address the problem of boredom but so might a chess club or football team. The buzz of joyriding is often a cure for boredom and it seems unlikely that chess or a football team would work for all but a few. TV, video games and drugs are the more likely pastimes of bored joyriders (fieldnotes). Chess and football may be cheaper than motor projects but they should not be used unless appropriate. This might require a typology of chess players. If the bored opportunist car thief exists separately from the motor fanatic or the relatively deprived then motor projects might be an answer for them.

Jones recognises that income inequality, particularly unemployment and benefit cuts for the young, means some young people can never expect to legally own and use a car and therefore may take a car if only to join the world where cars, status and wealth are linked. He calls these the relatively deprived drivers. He is quite clear that motor projects have nothing to offer those who steal cars because of this sense of deprivation. Whether this is true or not

there is a real problem that whatever type of joyrider a motor project is dealing with they will usually have lengthy disqualifications extending beyond the time to be spent at the project. Attendance at a project might provide some respite during such a disqualification.

The purpose of this discussion is not to demolish Jones typology prior to presenting an alternative typology here but to consider three intimately related matters in respect of motor projects. First, precisely what it is they do; secondly who is it they are doing it for or with and thirdly evaluating whether they are doing it as they intended and with the group targeted. Considering Jones' typology, or any other typology, might be a useful way of going about the first two.

The elements of a new typology might concentrate on the relationship to the car, gender, class and race at one level and type of car used and driving indulged in on another. This would emphasize the closeness of joyriding to 'normal' motoring and allow connections to be made to motoring offences like speeding, drink driving or Driving Whilst Disqualified. To build on Jones' typology it is necessary to consider the work of Pawson and Tilley (1994).

Pawson and Tilley (1994) set out a 'scientific realist' challenge to quasi-experimentalism in evaluation research. Their work is relevant here because the most common question asked of motor projects - and other community penalties or 'alternatives to custody' - is 'Does it work'.<sup>4</sup> In essence Pawson and Tilley argue that it is essential to know how a project, that is to be evaluated, might work. It is this point that Jones (1993) is trying to make through his typology of joyriders.

'Scientific realism' suggests that the evaluation of outcomes requires a knowledge of both contexts and of mechanisms. Thus they suggest nine possible mechanisms and five possible contexts for the operation of CCTV within Car Parks against car crime. Translating this to the

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4. Such is the pervasiveness of the question that a group of practitioners, including McGuire and Priestley (1985), have formed a conference organising body called 'What Works'.



context of motor projects and car crime is not simple and none of the literature on motor projects examined in Chapter 2 attempts it. Methodological issues have not been in the forefront of these evaluations which have often been carried out locally to meet the requirements of management or a funder. With a variety of success and explicitness they adopt what Pawson and Tilley call the OXO model where the situation before and after ('O') is measured in some way - the offender was a joyrider and now isn't - and the intervention ('X') - the motor project - must therefore have been successful. This is insufficient for a number of purposes.

First, as Jones (1993) points out, not all joyriders are the same; second, as has been pointed out, not all motor projects are the same which relates to the third point. The third point is crucial. Even if, by an OXO evaluation, the motor project is seen to work what was it about the motor project that worked? Not only are motor projects all different they comprise many elements in themselves and are rarely used as the sole response to joyriding. Thus in an OXO evaluation the intervention - the 'X' - may itself comprise the process of detection, prosecution, sentencing, probation and attendance at the motor project which itself may offer mechanical work, racing, informal and formal social work and education. Moreover, none of this deals with the difficulty of measuring the 'O' elements, i.e. how much of a joyrider were they and have they given up offending, changed offending patterns or targets or merely not been caught. It is these difficulties that lead many evaluations to focus on the more easily monitored facts of attendance or management information like whether the project was being mentioned in Pre Sentence Reports and targeted at the 'right' group.

Returning to the 'X' factor was it the mere presence of the car, formal groupwork, informal befriending that had an impact on the problem? Some of these could be tested, for instance a search for a correlation between the number of cars prepared or the numbers of cars raced might indicate the extent to which the car was relevant.

It is not possible to offer a fully scientific realist evaluation of the motor projects that were the

subject of fieldwork observations but a few contextual and mechanistic suggestions are made that build upon Jones (1993) theoretical observations and empirical fieldwork observations addressed to considering, not whether motor projects work but how they might work.

### Discussion of fieldwork

As is made clear in Chapter 4 the extent and nature of the fieldwork is inadequate to the task of explaining joyriding but was crucial in understanding motor projects and observing the variety of masculinities involved. Whilst throughout this thesis mention is made to fieldwork - and it has been influential in theory-building - it is appropriate to discuss it more fully here. Some of the differences between the two fieldwork sites are set out in Chapter 1 so the emphasis here will be on similarities. Themes that emerged were: car culture; media interest; gender and shop-floor/work/community. Some of these are discussed theoretically elsewhere, here the intention is to give observed examples. Many of these examples overlap with each other as will be seen but are discussed separately for analytical purposes. Material on joyriding and other law-breaking was presented in Chapter 5. The quotes are of fieldwork notes written up immediately after observation and sometimes contain direct quotes from respondents. However, direct quotes are few as this is not a verbal culture and much language is swearing and verbal vilification in personal terms which are highly significant for interactions between actors but do not add to the more abstract evidence presented here. Car culture is referred to in Chapter 1 and returned to in Chapter 8, moreover as Chapter 4 argues it is not possible for non-drivers to avoid being involved in 'car-culture', let alone a car-driving criminologist investigating car crime. As some of the descriptive material in Chapter 1 and much of the discussion in this chapter suggests motor projects are saturated in car culture. Indeed the very impulse to set up motor projects as an answer to car crime is indicative of the strength of that culture. Here the intention is to be more specific.

At the races at Wimbledon Stadium (14 February 1993) and at Arena, Essex (12 April 1993 and 17 July 1993) the projects are racing amongst and against drivers who drive bangers for

fun and not as part of any sentence or diversion from a court. The boys and the project workers blend perfectly with all the other 'petrol-heads'. Much as the weather is said to be the conversational small change of the English so the car is a *lingua franca* for these young men. The offices of both projects (and others of which I have knowledge) feature pictures of cars or have car magazines scattered about. Many project leaders and helpers have car or motor bike racing experience. One project organised a fund-raising event where corporate teams had bangers prepared for them. Many projects use kart racing as a leisure activity or reward yet increasingly such racing is used as part of team-building or rewarding in business. At both projects I witnessed, or had related to me, discussions between visiting police officers and staff and project members on the merits (speed) of various cars (10 May 1993 and 13 June 1994).

The extent of media interest in joyriding was such that methodological dreams of research into an undisturbed field proved fruitless. Both projects had frequent visits from the media - including that occasioned by the visit of the Prince of Wales to one of them. However, given the uncertainty of funding for such projects publicity is often a crucial means of securing ongoing funding or commercial sponsorship - both projects had car-related sponsorship in addition to probation or social services funding. Of the twelve visits made to one project journalists (sometimes more than one) were present on five occasions. For this reason I appear in a photograph in an annual report and on a BBC training video talking about joyriding. During this time the project leader and some of the project members appear on a daytime TV discussion programme. As this also illustrates some of the gender issues and is referred to in Chapter 8 (where the article is discussed) the visit of two women journalists is set out below as recorded in my fieldnotes:

As I arrive G and T are lounging outside enjoying the sun. I see that some of the guys are being interviewed by an attractive young woman and others are being photographed by another attractive young woman. I ask T and G what is going on. They tell me that the women are from the Sunday Sport doing a feature on alien joyriders and sex. Nothing the Sunday Sport does would surprise me and I understand that some of their women writers are chosen for their looks rather than their writing talents. So I sort of believe them but it turns out they are joking. I meet P and ask him what it's all about. He explains that



they come from *Ms Magazine*. I am fascinated that a feminist magazine, albeit a long established and now mainstream one, is interested in joyriding. But again I am wrong. Eventually I get to talk to the journalist. She has not heard of Gloria Steinem and sets me right. They are from *Mizz* magazine which is aimed at 17 year old girls. The article is part of a series of true life type stories of overcoming problems - in this instant giving up being a joyrider. J, S and PE are interviewed and photographed. Others may have been interviewed before but I did not see this. The photographing occasions some sexual innuendo particularly when they are asked to sit on the bonnet or out through the sunroof<sup>5</sup> holding a tool. I join in the joking. The women don't seem to find this offensive. They seem secure in their position and not threatened by this boyishness. Perhaps they recognize the inversion here. It is they who take the pictures and ask the questions. It will be their young female readers who will judge the actions of these young men and gaze at the pictures. (28 April 1993)

As the vignette above suggests gender issues become very obvious when women enter this all-male world but as we shall see later gender and sexuality also exist even when women are absent but first two contrasting observations about the presence of women on two other occasions:

I ask D who the youngster working with C is. I don't recognize him but he seems to know the ropes. It turns out that he is actually a young woman. P tells me that LE is one of his 'off the books' ie she is in excess of the twenty the project normally holds. She has been at the project before. She is the only girl in a family of six Irish brothers. She is not a convicted joyrider but uncles apparently lend her their cars or encourage her in the unlicensed use of family cars. L's banning still rankles as some of last Wednesday's meeting is replayed over the chips and tea. This and a later story from M are accompanied by more "fucks" and "cunts" than I previously remember. This cannot be for my benefit. Perhaps LE is the target? She laughs a little nervously. L reminds the room that "that word" is banned. This seems not to prevent any of the swearing. (fieldnotes, 10 May 1993)

Is it R's presence that considerably lessens the number of 'fucks' and prevents any 'cunts'? (fieldnotes, 5 May 1994)

One possible reason for these differences is that R is a member of staff. The observations also have to be seen against the normally continuous background of swearing during breaks. Some of these issues will be taken up when the theme of the shopfloor is taken up. One aspect of shopfloor culture that is often noted is the homophobic content of conversations in such homosocial settings. Some quotes from fieldnotes illustrate the point:

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5. Many of the cars have had sunroofs. For racing these will be covered up with a sheet of metal.

I get a better chance to talk and listen at the break for chips mid-evening. There is a lot of talk about cars and crime; gossip about the activities of people they know. I see less racism but just as much swearing and homophobic comments. S eventually picks up on this and points out the green notice on which the project's equal opportunities/anti-discrimination policy is set out. A couple of times during the evening the expression 'green card' is used to suggest someone is in breach of the policy. Unlike the over 17s group I notice no discussion of women or girls - mothers got no mention. This and the condemnatory remarks about gay men do not suggest to me that they are gay or are worried about being gay but that in the absence of women in their lives one way of expressing their emerging young male masculinity is through comparison with and opposition to what they imagine to be a fully formed male homosexuality. (2 November 1993)

Discussion at break on homophobia, prompted by S's complaint that staff were to be sent on a course. SE mentions to approving laughter "thumb up bum" as part of a discussion of his own heterosexual practice. J2 says he doesn't want someone sticking their prick up his bum. I respond, here "What makes you think anyone would want to?" (3 March 1994)

Thus even in the absence of women, other 'others' are conjured up to reassure them that they are or will grow to become 'men'. However, project members were able to witness other male interactions, for instance:

MY certainly takes the opportunity to test my knowledge and rib me about my lack of it. This is part of MY's style - his male style. It also happens to be part of mine. I recognize this and the undercurrent of aggression I wonder if he does? Easthope (1992) sees male banter as covering homosexual desire. This must be a very generalised desire as I don't think MY and I fancy each other. Indeed both of us behave as we do towards each other towards others too - male and female. Perhaps it is a form of fencing or sparring designed to keep people at bay? 'New men' both we often hug on meeting but I think we are playing a game of chicken - not daring to pull out of the clinch. I suspect that without an audience - of shockable homophobic men, or better, appreciative women - we would not do it. If one of us were to up the stakes by going for a kiss then I'm sure we would. I already know that I have kissed gay male friends on the lips, perhaps in much the same spirit of male bravado. (fieldnotes, 29 March 1994)

Along with homophobic, racist and sexist banter the shop-floor or work situation is commonly associated with windups (Collinson, 1992). Whilst I observed many windups amongst project members and between them and staff the observations set out below are windups involving me. As the example of the journalists from *Mizz* magazine already illustrates the windup has the purpose of checking out. I understand the reference to the Sunday Sport and share the assumption that the young women are attractive but spoil things by mentioning feminism. The

example below illustrates the 'testing' that any researcher might experience in the field but the extent to which they rely on car cultural references is suggestive:

MY tells me his car is a "Rover Capri". Is he making a joke about their use of Fords whilst being sponsored by Rover or testing my motoring knowledge? My first thought is the latter so quip that this is an interesting example of "badge engineering" by which I hope that they understand that I know that Rover don't make Capris and that I know some terms.(6 January 1994)<sup>6</sup>

These observations on motor projects as male domains with similarities to work and leisure are discussed below and related to theory in later chapters.

### Conclusion: how motor projects might work

An undated (but 1994) editorial from *The Oxford Times* titled 'The Unbeatables' highly praises the TRAX Motor Project and concludes that, "the late Mr Ness must be doffing a phantom fedora to everyone associated with Trax." Apparently Elliot Ness retired to Northern California, after bringing various Chicago gangsters to book, where he started a crime prevention scheme. According to the editorial, "he set up a detention camp in the woods, welcomed to it the most outrageous young male offenders known to the state correctional facility and made them into forest firefighters...and halved the recidivism rate." This was, "...to prove their manhood..." and become, "confident of their masculinity".

TRAX is favourably compared to the Ness 'boot camp'. Clearly Ness, and possibly the editorial writer, sees masculinity as something to be achieved in a 'this-will-make-a-man-of-you' way. There are elements of this in the work of Bly (1990) and his insistence on a retreat to the woods to meet the Wild Man. It assumes that a form of masculinity can work on the deviant masculinities of young men much as the masculinity of 'getting tough' on crime is assumed to work.

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6. 'Badge Engineering' refers to the practice of motor car companies applying the badge of a well-known marque to an inferior product to create a newly 'engineered' car.



My observations of motor project suggests they can give young men a place to safely explore what cars can do and to discover the legitimate limits to car use. But cars are dangerous even when not stolen. What are the legitimate uses of the car? These are being challenged not only by the green movement but increasingly by wider sections of the population concerned by road building. Every year the ownership and use of cars is increasingly hedged round by legislation and ways to enforce that legislation (for instance 'green' cameras to enforce exhaust emissions standards). It has to be recognised that the carefree ideal portrayed in car advertisements is increasingly at odds with the reality of traffic jams, high costs and legal regulation.

Joyriders have already discovered that the way round these problems, in the absence of money, is to take another person's car temporarily. Any motor project faces the problem of persuading TWOCers away from this 'successful' strategy for using cars towards behaviour that is extremely constrained legally (quite rightly in view of the dangers) and extremely costly (unfairly in view of the, albeit manufactured, need for a car today).

Two wide contextual factors have not been considered in examining motor projects. These are the extent of a car culture that embraces both joyriding and the assumption that motor projects would work with joyriders and the gendered nature of that car culture which lead some to oppose motor projects because they are 'macho' (see the myths discussed above). Clearly, but only implicitly, the assumption of the proponents of motor projects are that there is something about the car or working with cars that 'works'. Equally clearly, and more explicitly, the opponents presume that the connection between masculinity and cars is such that they cannot work and may exacerbate the problem. However, this connection between men and cars may offer a clue as to how motor projects do work.

That is, it may not be the presence of the car or working on it that works but the fact of being a safe space to be a young man in. But what about young women? Given the proportion of women and girls who commit car crime motor projects are always unlikely to have few or no

women on it. However, if there were appropriate young women would social services or probation feel able to refer them? A similar problem has been found with Community Service in the past with the suggestion that some women receive custody because whilst a CSO might be appropriate in theory none of the schemes appear appropriate in practice. This is not just about the provision of child care but about the atmosphere of projects.

The atmosphere of a typical motor project is like a garage rather than a social work setting; it is male-orientated. When the talk is not of cars and local gossip (much of which revolves around drugs and stolen property) it often concerns sex. Even talk about cars and local matters is enriched with sexual metaphors and imagery. The work on the cars and the talk allows the boys/men to be together without feeling uncomfortable. Vass (1984) noted the talk of cars and sport in his observations of Community Service. He also observed the extent to which rather than CSO being 'hard labour' it was a 'soft option'. In many respects these observations mirror those many male groups in paid employment. This may be a particular difficulty for newcomers or those who cannot convincingly act 'like a man'. Acceptance by the group demands not only an interest in or facility with cars but an appropriate verbal style and repertoire.

Proponents of motor projects do not seriously claim that the mere presence of cars at the project or the application of engine oil to hands 'magically' works on car crime but the literature on and claims of supporters show a good deal of 'faith' and many unexamined assumptions made about how they work. What this research suggests is that the magic ingredient may be 'masculinity'. The project may actually work through giving young men another way to be young men. The project may have given them cars to work on and race but it also offered in the shape of the male staff different models for being a man; ways of being a man that were closer to those that might be provided in a workplace (Collinson 1992).

It is a good thing that the projects work; however, gender issues cannot be ignored. The gender issues are important for female staff, male staff and clients with marginalised

sexualities, the female partners/parents of those attending and women in general. They are also important to male workers and clients more generally in establishing ways to be a man that do not involve the misuse of cars or the denigration of others by sex or sexuality.

Whilst motor projects have been criticised for their masculinity one of the conclusions of my observations is that whilst it may well be a problem it may also be the means by which such projects work. The driving/racing/fixing of cars may get young men through the door and keep them going through difficult times but it is the chance to become men that works.

It should be clear that this is not the same as the 'It will make a man of you' argument for National Service (or its civilian clones). In the expression 'become a man' both the act of becoming and 'a man' are deeply problematic. The 'National Service' argument assumed that the end product - 'manhood' - was fixed but the process was fraught with difficulties; there was a danger that on the path to manhood the young man might become a 'cissy' or a criminal. That is they may become insufficiently manly (the cissy, the queer) or over manly (the criminal, the wife-beater). The message of the new sociology of masculinity suggests that the cissy, the criminal and the 'real man' are all ways of doing masculinity, or being masculine. One of the findings of this research is that for some young men for a part of their life one way of doing masculinity is through stealing cars. It may be that the anecdotal evidence for the very small, but rising, number of young women involved in crime, including joyriding, is that it provides them with a way to 'do masculinity' as they see that it is a successful strategy for their fathers and brothers.

If motor projects work through helping some young men to discover others ways to do masculinity which are socially acceptable both feminists and ecologists might then point out that those socially acceptable ways may still be damaging to women and to the environment. True, but it is the illegal and dangerous use of cars that brings them to the project so the first priority of the project must be that. It is interesting to speculate on how projects to make young men more sympathetic to women and/or the environment would work, as these are



clearly needed too. Many projects working with the perpetrators of violence against women take a deliberately pro-feminist line and Community Service can involve 'environmental' jobs.

Even if motor projects could not effect the immediate driving and car related constraints, nor wider socio-political issues, they must be aware of them. If they do work then they return their 'successes' to a culture where the car continues to be needed and so very available. It is not as if the former joyrider - having spent eight weeks addressing their offending behaviour - now avoids temptation. Temptation may be brought to him if he was known as a good driver (as was one of my informants). Whilst cars remain legal their cost should not be made prohibitive.

Connell is right to emphasize that even men who are not explicitly party to hegemonic masculinity share in the 'collective project of oppression' (1987:215). For these reasons, support for motor projects which use the car - an environmentally unfriendly and tool and trophy of hegemonic masculinity - can only be provisional and temporary. It has been argued that motor projects work by using the car and use of cars to bring young men 'back on track'. They work in moving these young men away from the use of illegal cars to create and maintain their own masculinity. They do not move these men away from the dream of legal or tolerated use of cars in constructing those masculinities far less problematising the content and practices - hetero-sexist and racist - of those masculinities. Such is the danger and prevalence of joyriding they should be supported but the danger comes from the car and from the masculinities that use it.

## CHAPTER 7 MASCULINITIES IN CRIMINOLOGY

A youth worker tells me that on a karting trip with young male joyriders they didn't put each other, or her, down in their attempts to race the karts but encouraged each other.<sup>1</sup> There is no evidence from either the literature or fieldwork that the same positive peer pressure applies when joyriding but this more cooperative side can be seen in motor projects alongside the more stereotypical competitive banter of men. Some of the theories about men, masculinities and crime are discussed below in an attempt to throw some light on why young men are disproportionately involved with car theft and motoring offences. More importantly these theories ask questions of criminology and of male criminologists and their relation to male offenders. As Leonard says:

Theoretical criminology was constructed by men, about men. It is simply not up to the analytical task of explaining female patterns of crime. Although some theories work better than others, they all illustrate what social scientists are slowly recognising within criminology and outside the field: that our theories are not the general explanations of human behaviour they claim to be, but particular understandings of male behaviour. (1982:1-2)

The purpose here is not to resurrect or defend the theoretical criminology that Leonard is so critical of but to extend her critique. Her critique, like those of many 'feminist criminologists' is tied to sex-role theories (Box, 1983:174). My criticism of theoretical criminology is not that it fails to explain male behaviour - though it largely does - but that it assumes what that male behaviour is and assumes - sometimes explicitly but more usually implicitly - what masculinity is. Such an observation is not intended to replace feminist work on the deficiencies of criminology but to add to that critique. Necessarily this involves occasional critical engagement with elements within feminism. Naffine argues:

Not only have criminologists failed to pursue the 'man question' of crime, but they have also been insensitive to the effects of conventional understandings of masculinity and femininity on their own understandings of crime. (1997:6)

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1. Fiona Factor personal communication 17/5/95.



Before setting out what can be said about masculinities and crime today it is necessary to review some of the history of theorising about masculinity to establish a context for the very little that has been said about crime specifically. At present the growing literature on masculinities has little to say explicitly about crime and most criminology continues only implicitly to look at masculinities so it will be necessary to reinterpret some criminological classics in the light of thinking on masculinities and to theorize what more current work on masculinities might have to say about crime. Poised between these positions are the works of criminologists like Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin who most explicitly addressed themselves to the joint issue of men (or least boys) and crime (or delinquency) which is why their work was explored in chapter 2. However, as will be shown by deploying a contemporary pro-feminist critique their work is seen to be of the 'real man' variety, where young male criminals are the misguided heroes of the book and the male criminologist the only one who is man enough to empathize with their predicament but also stand in fatherly or avuncular judgement of it.

Briefly where theorists have turned their attention to the question of men it has often been in taken-for-granted, 'common sense' ways that rely on stereotypical views of men and what are seen as their obvious differences from women. Sometimes those differences rely on the sexual dimorphism of the human species, others point to the continuing socio-cultural differences or some combination of biology and social factors. The oldest tradition has not been to study men *qua* men at all but to study 'people' and to make pronouncements on people in a universalising fashion. However, these mainly male (a)theorists were actually studying men and extrapolating from that to people and by reduction back to women. In this tradition women are rarely considered other than for their differences from men. Men were the fixed point and women compared to them. Even in this tradition women's differences should have alerted them to the shortcomings of their theories even if not to the phallogentric nature of their assumption of a male norm. However, the more women were found to be different the more 'other' they became - so different that the general theory need suffer no embarrassment at its failure to explain women or their difference. Hart (1994) notes the linking of lesbian sexuality to this 'otherness'. Criminology has been criticised roundly by feminists



(Heidensohn, 1985, 1987, 1994; Naffine, 1987 and 1997; Smart, 1990) and male pro-feminists (Scruton, 1990) for these failures yet mostly continues to study men as criminals not criminals as men, or as Sim (1994:101) says, "while many of these studies have been academically sophisticated and theoretically advanced they have concentrated on *men as prisoners rather than prisoners as men*"

It would be tempting to attempt to set out all the biological, psychological and psychoanalytic theories of men and masculinity (see Edley and Wetherell, 1995 for a good guide) before attempting to relate each to crime and criminological explanations. Neither does space permit a separate discussion of anthropological models which "... have examined masculinity cross-culturally, stressing the variations in the behaviours and attributes associated with being a man" (Kimmel and Messner (1995,xv). Discussion of some of those issues will have to be ignored here and others only glossed in passing comment on criminological theories.

Even in the social scientific positivism of Glueck and Glueck (1964) the ghost of Lombroso presides, his presence signalled by denial. The Gluecks quote a review by Mannheim of their work:

Clearly, some of the findings in their earlier book, *Unravelling Juvenile Delinquency* (1950) - notably the considerably higher rate of mesomorphs in the delinquent group - seemed to be crying out for such further study. As the authors are careful to explain, the fact that this particular biological finding was selected for more detailed analysis was not "animated by any notion of respectful reawakening of the somnolent Lombrosian theory". The choice of somatic factors was merely due to their belief that this was to be "a promising focus of attention"..(Glueck and Glueck, 1964:7)

Mannheim's contention that this explanation "can be readily accepted" (Glueck and Glueck, 1964:7) would carry more weight if other equally somatic factors - such as being male - were studied too. They moved on from the 'pure' biology of body types to their "five social factors" ('discipline of boy by father'; 'supervision of boy by mother'; 'affection of father for boy'; 'affection of mother for boy' and 'cohesiveness of family'), and their five "traits of character structure" ('social assertion'; 'defiance'; 'suspicion'; 'destructiveness' and 'emotional

lability') and five "traits of temperament" ('adventurousness'; 'extroversion in action'; 'suggestibility'; 'stubbornness' and 'emotional insecurity'. All of these traits are presented as sharply differentiating the delinquent from the non-delinquent.

They use the language of science and medicine, for example, "We state that 'in order to arrive at the clearest differentiation of disease and health, comparison must be made between the unquestionably pathologic and the normal" (Glueck and Glueck, 1964:269) but the objectiveness of the Rorschach Test and of psychiatric examination would not be universally accepted.<sup>2</sup> Yet, this scientific attitude is mixed with a moral-political discourse as in this discussion of "the problem of working mothers":

Basically, the time is ripe for a reassessment of the entire situation. As more and more enticements in the way of financial gain, excitement, and independence from the husband are offered married women to lure them from their domestic duties, the problem is becoming more widespread and acute. (1964:57)

This may be seen in the light of Edley and Wetherell's comments on the politics of sex difference research, "Like intrepid detectives, they are after the Truth, whatever its colour. However, in reality it is very often impossible to separate politics from science" (1995:10-11). There are obvious feminist objections too but Walklate (1995) cites the work of the Gluecks as evidence of female activity in criminology into sex differentials in crime and Klein (1973) only gives glancing mention; Heidensohn (1994) makes no mention at all. One explanation may be that, as Downes and Rock - noting that some of the predictive devices resurface in Hirschi's control theory - say:

Unpopular too has been the work of the Gluecks, whose attempts to predict delinquency in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s became associated with the sociological equivalent of Original Sin - a stress on the pathological, the individualistic, and the psychological. (1988:218)

They may also have been 'cast out' in view of comments by the Gluecks themselves, such as:

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2. Personality testing by interpretation of the subjects response to ten bilaterally symmetrical inkblots.

The most confident and severest critics have been a group whose writings have the tone of fire-breathing chevaliers eager to do battle for that purest queen of the exact sciences, Sociology, to which the authors of *Unravelling* allegedly did not pay adequate tribute. (1964:263)

This belligerently medieval irony is aimed at Sutherland, Hartung and Terrence Morris. In the same chapter Burgess, Shaw and McKay and Albert Cohen, amongst others, are brusquely quashed. Whilst the Gluecks rely on biological and medical science they do not foreground sexual difference let alone raise the possibility of social or sexual roles raised from the 1930s by G H Mead. Aggregating and comparing their studies of male and female delinquents they picked out factors which have a recognisable sex difference but take for granted the naturalness of sex differentiation within those factors though some can be presented as gender neutral, for instance, size of family or birth rank of offender.

Even where the Gluecks criticize their critics, quite rightly, for failing to explain why not all those who live in a criminal area or are subject to an overabundance of definitions favourable to crime actually turn to crime they themselves fail to note that they themselves then fail to explain why it is boys disproportionately to girls. They describe delinquents as being distinguished from the non-delinquent by these means:

(1) physically, in being essentially mesomorphic in constitution (solid, closely knit, muscular); (2) temperamentally, in being excessively restlessly energetic, impulsive, extroverted, aggressive, destructive (often sadistic)...;(3) in attitude, by being hostile, defiant, resentful, suspicious, stubborn, socially assertive, adventurous, unconventional, non-submissive to authority; (4) psychologically, in tending to direct and concrete rather than symbolic, intellectual expression, and in being less methodical in their approach to problems; (5) socio-culturally, in having been reared to a far greater extent than the control group in homes of little understanding, affection, stability, or moral fibre by parents usually unfit to be guides and protectors or, according to psychoanalytic theory desirable sources of emulation and the construction of a consistent, well-balanced, and socially normal superego... (Glueck and Glueck, 1964:255-256)

This reads like the stereotype of much male behaviour and attitudes. However, within the same passage from which the quote above is taken we find this interesting discursive move:



Connell makes the point that the role can be as broad as the 'speaker of a language' or as narrow as 'astronaut'. A more criminological example would be as broad as 'the speeding motorist role' to as narrow as 'the serial killer role'. That is the concept is vague but is attractive when talking about gender because it appears to shift away from biological assumptions about sex and towards psychology in ways that open up socialisation and agents of socialisation to a reforming critique that many feminists have adopted. However, it fails to explain why the role sender should voluntarily conspire to sanction behaviour contrary to role. Underneath it remains a basically biologically determinist account with different social superstructures - and their different *dramatis personae* - erected on that base. He points out that we do not speak of 'race-roles' or 'class-roles'. The emphasis on the rigidity of the role and the vigilance of the role senders - such as parents, peers or press - occludes the structures of power, substituting in its stead, norms and stereotypes. Additionally these theoretical deficiencies are joined by the presence of countervailing field observations that cast doubt on the norms and stereotypes. Sex-role theory does not so much describe the norm but seeks itself to enforce them. It cannot explain changes in the lives of men but assumes a smooth reproduction of masculinity and femininity. A simple cross-cultural comparison illustrates the variability of 'proper' behaviour for men and women. The Guardian (11 December 1995) - reviewing an anglo-japanese magazine - notes the amazement of the Japanese to see UK men eating chocolate: in Japan only women and children eat chocolate.'

Departures from the script are seen to be deviant. As Connell notes, "Sex role theory has a way of accommodating departures from the normative standard case, through the concept of deviance" (1987:52). Both the rigidity and the vagueness of the concept ensures a plentiful supply of deviants but little concept of the effects of power and resistance to power amongst the standard and deviant populations. Much of the criminological literature discussed below runs counter to Connell on this point though. Whilst female criminality, or indeed any slight departure from the norm, marks a woman out as 'deviant', a greater 'spread' or 'range' of behaviour is allowed to men. Much of the feminist criticism that inspires my discussion makes the point that whilst a male criminal may be 'deviant' by the behavioral and legal norm it is not

seen to be 'deviant' within his sex-role. Indeed his 'gallant' attempts to meet the demands of the sex-role may be seen as the problem (or cause of 'strain'). Gay theorists might want to also point out the converse. Gay men are seen to be 'deviant' to their sex-role whether they break the law or not and their 'criminality' is not credited with the glamorous air of misplaced resistance to the norms (see also Groombridge, 1997 and Tomsen, 1997).

Some of the criticisms of sex-role theory may be directed at what Connell (1987) calls categorical theories which talk not of sex roles which individuals are socialised into for good or bad but of broad categories which oppose each other. Some feminists drawing on Marx's two class categories talk of men and women as opposing, warring categories. Racial separatists - whether the apologists of apartheid or Louis Farrakhan - would see black and white as race categories. Categories are often deployed politically to raise the consciousness of the oppressed group. Connell's criticism of this strand within cultural and radical feminism - whether of Brownmiller (1975) or Chodorow (1978) - certainly feeds into Messerschmidt's engagement with feminism. Categories need not come from biology but, as with Marx are seen to be structural; and, of course, may need the skilled observer, or political vanguard, to point them out. Connell is critical of feminist categoricism that lays the blame for violence and destruction of the planet at the door of men's sexuality without dodging, for an instance, men's overwhelming involvement. Within feminism, categoricism has been criticised by women of colour, lesbians and those with disabilities.

In the more sophisticated models multi-dimensional categories around divisions of sex, class, age etc can be imagined. For their different purposes the Census and the British and Islington Crime Surveys could be seen to be categorical in their treatment of gender. Left realism rightly seeks to learn from feminism and place experience centre-stage. It has been criticised for its reliance on a method which some feminists see as incompatible with the task of gathering women's experience. Newburn and Stanko applaud the underdog perspective but not its uncritical examination which,

divides the world into oppressors and oppressed. Thus, all men are oppressors unless they can be located in another oppressed group (elderly men perhaps, victims of racist or/and homophobic attacks certainly, male victims of child sexual abuse probably) (1994:158).

Newburn and Stanko do not cite Connell on this - though they otherwise make much use of his work - but conclude "left realists continue to talk of men and women as if they too were largely homogenous *categories*" (1994:159, emphasis added). As Connell does note such categorical distinctions make both homosexuality and homophobia amongst men very difficult to explain.

Much of the discussion in this section derives from an engagement with the work of Naffine (1987) and Messerschmidt (1993). A small note has to be made here about the use of Naffine. Her intention, as the subtitle of her book makes clear, is to understand *the construction of women in criminology*. So why rely on her for a discussion of the construction of men in criminology? For the good reason that the field is so new that only female writers, with the exception of Messerschmidt, have thought to examine the issue critically. As feminism has developed that examination has moved out from simply remedying criminologies deficiencies through empirical studies of women and radicalizing victimology from a feminist standpoint to a consideration of gender whether through the transgressiveness of Cain (1990a) or the postmodernism of Smart (1990). It is these latter considerations of gender that inform the next section on social constructivism. This growth in feminist scholarship has perforce raised issues about men. The use made of Naffine here is directed to what she says explicitly and implicitly about men and crime. Such is the importance of feminism to the social construction of masculinity that Messerschmidt (1993) spends much of a book on *Masculinities and Crime* on recapping feminist thought and reiterating many of its criticisms of criminology.

In his discussion of sex roles Messerschmidt (1993) commends Sutherland for rejecting "biogenic perspectives on crime" (1993:15) but recognises too, that Sutherland handles gender inadequately despite recognising that nothing "is so frequently associated with



criminal behaviour as being a male" but also "it is obvious that maleness does not explain criminal behaviour" (in Messerschmidt 1993:16). What then was the explanation?

Messerschmidt quotes from the *Principles of Criminology* :

...the most important difference is that girls are supervised more carefully and behave in accordance with anti-criminal behaviour patterns taught to them with greater care and consistency than in the case of boys. From infancy girls are taught that they must be nice, while boys are taught that they should be rough and tough; a boy who approaches the behaviour of girls is regarded as 'sissy'. This difference in care and supervision presumably rested originally on the fact that the female sex is the one which becomes pregnant. (Sutherland and Cressey 1960:115)

This illustrates a lot of the difficulties of sex role theorisation. Earlier in the same discussion of "Sex ratios in crime" (1960:111) Sutherland brushes aside the contention that,

the higher rate of delinquency of the male sex is due to the biological characteristic of the male. This conclusion has no more justification than the conclusion that a death rate of males by lightning six times as high for males is due to biological differences. (1960:112)

Yet he concludes the section by resort to women's biology.

Naffine rightly takes Sutherland to task for his failure to develop this and says that "femaleness emerges as an anomaly" (1987:31) in his work. This may be so but his sixth, and central, proposition that 'a person becomes a delinquent because of an excess of definitions favourable to violation of the law over definitions unfavourable to violation of the law' might be taken to apply to women and men alike but women, whether in delinquent areas, in delinquent families, subject to absolute or relative deprivation, as a whole generally receive more definitions unfavourable to the violations of the law. Many of those definitions will be deeply sexist and unfavourable to the violations of the 'fathers law' (patriarchy). Indeed much early feminism is devoted to exposing the anomalous position of women and contesting the 'care and supervision' they received and the biological tyranny represented by pregnancy. Naffine is right to note Sutherland failed to make these connections himself and attempts to apply his work directly to women have not always been successful.

It is interesting to note that Smart's early work on female crime is seen by Naffine (1987) to be influenced by Sutherland, for instance,

The women involved in petty property offending have not required training in violence, using weapons or tools, or in specialised techniques like safe-breaking. On the contrary, the skills required can be learned in everyday experience, and the socialisation in a delinquent subculture or a sophisticated criminal organization is entirely unnecessary (1976:15-16).

Those familiar with Smart's post-modernist criticism of criminologies ongoing, but often undeclared, positivism might be surprised to find Naffine arguing "one can find lines of argument which have kinship with Cohen's theory, but the connections are never fully articulated" (1987:49) This critique of Smart's one time position is a sisterly one - *Women, Crime and Criminology* is called "the most intellectually rigorous and theoretically sophisticated in the field" (1987:49) - and turns on quotes such as "this 'passivity' is in keeping with the woman's role especially where stolen goods are hidden or used in the home" (Smart 1976 quoted in Naffine 1987:50). The corollary of this then is men's 'activity'.

Sutherland and Cressey dismiss Parsons in a footnote:

...girls are less delinquent than boys partially because the girls receive an apprenticeship training from their mothers for the careers into which they are to enter, while boys remain during the same age isolated from the occupational activities of their fathers and this leads to frustration of the boys and consequent delinquency. If this thesis were valid, the delinquency rates of the two sexes should be more nearly alike in rural districts, where both boys and girls receive this apprenticeship. (1960:115)

This sums up much of Parsons argument in respect of delinquency but first this needs to be placed in the context of his wider thinking. He argued that society functioned like an organism and, drawing on Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity models of society, argued that societies could be classified by their pattern variables. Those of pattern A were 'expressive' and those of pattern B 'instrumental'. However, within the same society both patterns could be observed in the sub-systems; thus the family was seen to follow pattern A, the expressive. Unlike other theorists in this tradition he draws on Freud to emphasize the importance of early childhood and the function of the family in the integration and stability of society.



Unsurprisingly the expressive role fell to women and the instrumental to men. Men were expected to move between the family and the wider society, particularly the world of work, and had the 'boundary-role'. So women were not formally inferior in this model but had a complementary role to men and provided both fulfilled their roles harmony would reign. Some of the problems with this schema can be seen in Edley and Wetherell's contention that the roles are contradictory and resonate with sociobiology (1995:78).

So the roles played by men and women are socially useful and socially transmitted but the roles of masculinity and femininity are still played by biological men and women. The processes of socialisation coach the biological male and female into masculinity and femininity. Again childbirth and care is seen to underpin the reasoning behind the sexual division of labour. In this scheme a prime deviance is failing to play the role allotted you by biological and social necessity. Hence Parson's strictures in respect of homosexuality.

Turning to delinquency he notes,

girls are more apt to be relatively docile, to conform in general according to adult expectations to be 'good', whereas boys are more apt to be recalcitrant to discipline and defiant of adult authority and expectations (quoted in Messerschmidt 1993:18).

The reason for this is that girls are brought up in the expressive atmosphere of the family and can identify with the mother and see her role (career) ahead of her whereas boys initially identify with the mother but discover that women are inferior and become anxious and engage in 'compulsive masculinity' by way of compensation and

...refuse to have anything to do with girls. 'Sissy' becomes the worst of all insults. They get interested in athletics and physical prowess, in the things in which men have the most primitive and obvious advantage over women. Furthermore they become allergic to all expression of tender emotion; they must be 'tough'. This universal pattern bears all the hallmarks of a 'reaction-formation'. It is so conspicuous, not because it is simply 'masculine nature' but because it is a defence against a feminine identification. (quoted in Messerschmidt 1993:18)

The reaction-formation element of this quote is taken up in the work of Albert Cohen.

Interestingly too, Parson's Freudianism appears to be tending in the direction subsequently



taken by Chodorow. The major difference is Chodorow's feminism which leads her to call for equal participation by men in childcare yet Middleton notes "Many feminists fear that Chodorow's theory is a recurrence of the ideological use of psychoanalytic theory to pressure women back into motherhood by blaming mothers for creating the psychic structures of masculinity" (1992:128) Parsons would certainly see women as responsible for those psychic structures and ultimately for social order. Compare Chodorow's analysis of the same issue with Parsons:

Masculinity becomes an issue as a direct result of a boy's experience of himself in his family - as result of being parented by a woman. For children of both genders, mothers represent regression and lack of autonomy. A boy associates these issues with his gender identification as well. Dependence on his mother, attachment to her, and identification with her represent that which is not masculine; a boy must reject dependence and deny attachment and identification. Masculine gender role training becomes much more rigid than the feminine. A boy represses those qualities he takes to be feminine inside himself, and rejects and devalues women and whatever he considers to be feminine in the social world. (Chodorow, 1978:181)

Turning now more specifically to Parsons' criminology and to criticisms of it; Messerschmidt notes "it was the first attempt to connect masculinity with the gendered nature of crime" (1993:19) to the extent that Naffine (1987) devotes a chapter to what she calls 'Masculinity Theory' and cites Parsons as its first expounder. According to Naffine "Masculinity theory comprises two ideas: crime is symbolically masculine and masculinity supplies the motive for a good deal of crime. The qualities demanded of the criminal - daring, toughness, aggression all exemplify maleness. The boy or man who engages in crime can demonstrate to the world that he is truly virile." (1987:43).

Naffine is rightly critical of Parsons' sexism but makes no criticism of his method or concepts directly. He is seen to have nurtured a stereotype of women in sociology which is "imported into criminology by Cohen" (1987:59). Cohen is discussed here as the developer of 'reaction formation' as an explanation of working class male delinquency.<sup>3</sup> As Naffine puts it:

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3. Naffine discusses him in separate chapters as a follower of Parsons on the one hand but more substantially of Merton on the other hand. This is a little perverse since Merton only rates one footnote mention in *Delinquent Boys*. However, Taylor *et al* (1975:135) note

Vandalism, joyriding and fighting all became means of expressing disdain for the colourless, hard-working and achieving life of the middle class boy...Anti-social activity demonstrates toughness and affirmed one's masculinity.(1987:9)

It, perhaps, takes a feminist to note, or to take seriously, the 'Boys' of the book's title seriously rather than 'delinquency' or 'the gang'. Others emphasize the link with Durkheim "in that sub-culture is seen a functional creation enabling individuals to handle many of the problems created for them by the social structure" (Morrison, 1995:281). Sumner notes,

No one seemed to notice the point that if the delinquent culture was so common in US cities perhaps it was not so 'sub', and few made anything of the fact that its occupants were mostly black. Their blackness, and the blackness of the so called sub-culture, was completely glossed over in the theory (1994:181).

Cohen is explicit that the standards that working class boys aspire to, and largely fail to achieve, are those which are "typically American" (1955:137). Naffine notes "Cohen regards his culture as gendered" (1987:11) but does not pick up on the potentially radical contention that typical American behaviour is the same as "that which we stigmatize as 'pathological' ..The same value system, impinging upon children differently equipped to meet it, is instrumental in generating both delinquency and respectability." (Cohen,1955:137). She concentrates on his sexism and his treatment of masculinity as active as against women's passivity. She quotes the rightly infamous passage:

The delinquent is the rogue male. His conduct may be viewed ...positively ...as the exploitation of modes of behaviour which are traditionally symbolic of untrammelled masculinity... which are not without a certain aura of glamour and romance (1955:140).

She could have noted the next passage where he notes its 'subterranean' presence in "respectable culture as well but only in disciplined and attenuated forms as in organised sports, in fantasy and in make-believe games, or vicariously as in movies, television and comic books" (1955:140). Clearly he could not bring himself to say "and by doing criminology". Clearly, if "boys collect stamps and girls collect boys" (1955:142) then criminologists collect

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"Cohen denies his theory, despite its parallels with Merton, is an application of anomie".



gangs of boys. Cohen fits Naffine's definition of 'masculinity theory' better than Parsons but Cloward and Ohlin fit her view on the 'frustrated offender' (the chapter title).<sup>4</sup> Naffine also fails to address some class issues raised by Cohen who sees the prolonged dependence of middle-class boys upon their parents as potentially aggravating,

In brief, not only must the middle-class boy overcome an early feminine identification and prove his maleness, even the opportunities to assume the legitimate signs of maleness are likely to be denied him (1955:166).

The 'legitimate signs of maleness' are not just a job but a breadwinner role. The earlier entry of the working class boy could give him an advantage over the middle class boy forever delaying his gratification. Cohen therefore congratulates himself that, modifying Parsons, he can explain both working class and middle-class delinquency. Middle class male delinquency is explained as, "*primarily* an attempt to cope with a basic anxiety in the area of sex-role identification; it has the primary function of giving reassurance to one's essential masculinity." Whereas, the working class youth, more sure of his 'essential masculinity' has a primary problem "of adjustment in the area of ego-involved status differences in a status system defined by the norms of respectable middle-class society" (1955:168).

Cohen is mealy-mouthed in his policy recommendations in respect of the criminogenic status system he blames for working class delinquency and makes no mention of issues of masculinity for, contrary to Naffine, Cohen sees society not as 'gendered' but 'sexed' as this quote illustrates.

My skin has nothing of the quality of down or silk, there is nothing limpid or flute-like about my voice, I am a total loss with needle and thread, my posture and carriage are wholly lacking in grace. These imperfections cause me no distress - if anything, they are gratifying - because I conceive myself to be a man and want people to recognize me as a fully-fledged, unequivocal representative of my sex. (1955:138)

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4. It should be noted that Cohen credits, in an endnote (1955:164), two psychoanalysts Alexander and Healy in 1935 with emphasising the role of 'masculine protest' as a factor in anti-social behaviour. However, Connell (1994) credits Alfred Adler with the phrase earlier still, relating overcompensation as a component of neurosis.



This could be taken as a heavy-handed compliment to his wife preliminary to describing her as “not greatly embarrassed by her inability to tinker with or talk about the internal organs of a car, by her modest attainments in arithmetic or by her inability to lift heavy objects”(1955:138).

Another reading is ‘Hey, I may be middle-class but I am a regular guy’. An unkind psycho-analytic reading is that he is unsure of his own sex-role and that ‘fully-fledged’ and ‘unequivocal’ have a phallic meaning rendered more patriarchal by his fantastic claim to have conceived himself. Messerschmidt quotes the same passage but presents it more kindly thus,

In a section of *Delinquent Boys*, headed ‘What About the Sex Differences?’ Cohen revealed his acceptance of Sutherland’s and Parsons’ idea of dichotomous, biologically based sex roles, by using himself and his wife as examples. (1993:19)

Heidensohn, closer to my reading, notes of the same passage, “First he assures us of his own masculinity” (1985:133).

Messerschmidt concludes, “Nevertheless Sutherland, Parsons, and Cohen can be credited for putting masculinity on the criminological agenda” (1993:22).<sup>5</sup> Feminists might want to argue that they did so by opposing that masculinity to a stereotypical femininity and expelling it from criminology. Messerschmidt partially exonerates these masculinity theorists in the absence of much feminist theorising at the time and the widespread assumption of natural difference.

Cloward and Ohlin are relevant not only because of their long term influence but also because before setting out their own theory of limited legal and illegal opportunities they review some other contemporary theories of delinquency. We shall see what they have to say specifically about “Masculine Identification and Delinquent Subcultures” (1961:48). They set out the basics of the theory and their view of sex differences - which mix, in now familiar fashion,

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5. Heidensohn (1985:136) gives this honour to Grosser’s unpublished but widely cited *Juvenile Delinquency and Contemporary American Sex Roles* (1951). She notes the distinction of the list of borrowers at Harvard Library.

nature and nurture:

Sex differences are not just biological; they also reflect differences in social definitions of masculinity and femininity. Part of 'growing up' entails learning the social roles prescribed for the members of each sex. Sometimes young people seeking to make an appropriate sex identification encounter serious obstacles; tendencies toward aberrant behaviour may result. This problem of adjustment arises from efforts to conform to cultural expectations under which conformity is hampered or precluded. (1961:48)

Set out so starkly it is a surprise that these theorists did not also seek to explain homosexuality as well as crime by the same means. The 'masculine protest' and even the sexual delinquency of girls - the only crime allowed women by these theories - was however, resolutely heterosexual.

Cloward and Ohlin see Parsons as the key to this school of thought but also mention Cohen and Miller. All are criticised for failing to make "clear definitions of the types of delinquent behaviour that are supposedly explained by problems of masculine identification" (1961:50). Further "An emphasis upon toughness, aggressiveness, and hedonism may or may not result in delinquent acts or norms." (1961:51). They also doubt,

the distribution of the masculine-identity crisis...As we have noted, there is no firm agreement among theorists as to where in the social structure this problem occurs most frequently or in most acute form (1961:51).

They note that Parsons found female-centred families in all classes whereas Miller emphasised the absence of a male role model in working class families. For Cloward and Ohlin delinquent norms preceded delinquent acts so masculinity theorists "Failure to specify the problems of masculine identification and the emergence of delinquent norms leads to a further theoretical difficulty" (1961:53). However, Cloward and Ohlin do admit,

There is little doubt that barriers to masculine identification may produce a tendency for adolescent males to assert their fundamental maleness by engaging in aggressive deviant conduct. But there is an important difference between deviant and delinquent acts. (1961:53)

The difference for them is that delinquent acts "evokes a judgement by agents of criminal justice" (1961:3). They also make the relevant point that,

If delinquency rates are increasing, the theorist would have to show that boys are experiencing greater difficulty developing a sense of masculinity; if rates are decreasing, he would have to show that problems of masculine identity are diminishing (1961:53).

They conclude that 'masculine identity theory' does explain 'compulsive masculinity'.

A politically negative aspect of sex-role theory is the emphasis placed by some 'masculinists' on the burdens of being a male; such as early death, higher rates of suicide and criminalisation. This is, perhaps, best seen as a male backlash against the imagined or anticipated victory of feminism. It is perhaps a mark of how flexible sex-role theory can be that some feminists have used it to argue a close association between the male sex role and crime.

As Oakley says:

Criminality and masculinity are linked because the sort of acts associated with each have much in common. The demonstration of physical strength, a certain kind of aggressiveness, visible and external proof of achievement, whether legal or illegal - these are facets of the ideal male personality and also much of criminal behaviour. Both male and criminal are valued by their peers for these qualities. Thus, the dividing line between what is masculine and what is criminal may at times be a thin one. (1972 in Box 1983:175)

That is the socialisation of men as men is a problem in itself. The strongest version of this radical feminism is Brownmiller's contention that "When men discovered that they could rape they proceeded to do it" (1975:13-14). It may be this 'strength', this 'kind of aggressiveness' that Oakley has in mind. However, it also seems that she may have bought wholesale 'the external proof of achievement' and Cohen's 'criminal as rogue male' arguments. The reality of crime, like the reality of paid employment, is that the requirements for special male characteristics have always been overemphasised, possibly to keep women out. Much crime requires little strength or aggression and 'getting away with it' is the greatest proof of achievement. Similarly women are discovering that the 'world of work' beneath and through the 'glass ceiling' is easier than men always let on. As Scutt (in Naffine, 1987:61) says:

Could it be that every act of murder is 'aggressive'? Or that murder 'with a blunt instrument' is aggressive, murder by painless poisoning 'passive'? or non-aggressive? Is writing a false cheque passive? aggressive? Is persuading



an American to buy Tower Bridge, or a Londoner to buy the Brooklyn Bridge, or either to buy the Sydney Harbour Bridge, aggressive? Shoplifting aggressive? passive?

Both Box and Messerschmidt quote the passage from Oakley. Box, in a positivistic vein, notes the assumption about the stereotypes of male and criminal behaviour - "the independent variables" (1983:175) - and the subjective meaning of criminal behaviour. That is just as Young (1975) notes the tendency to attack ones opponents through an inversion of their theory so feminists took sex role theory to invert the heroism of the rogue male and picture him as the villain. Messerschmidt notes these problems but is kinder, perhaps because he then uses her observation, "Oakley's argument is not necessarily incorrect; it is clear that criminal behaviour ... may indeed serve as a resource for constructing a particular type of masculinity" (1993:27).

All the sex role theories discussed so far have the 'merit' of addressing, however poorly or implicitly, issues around sex, gender and deviance. Indeed many of the biological ones are explicit. The work of Cohen and of Cloward and Ohlin has been discussed here so extensively because of its engagement with the issue of masculinity and crime. Their work is more usually categorised as 'sub-cultural' and criticised for its functionalism, relevance solely to the USA or failure to address class or 'race' adequately. However,

Rather than simply being dismissed, the sub-cultural 'classics' should be re-read critically so that questions hitherto ignored or waved aside in embarrassment become central. (1991:17).

Whilst McRobbie is talking about Willis and Hebdige her comments can be taken to refer additionally to Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin and unusually for the time, Dorn and South specifically criticize the whole sub-cultural tradition for its failure to attend to gender as an issue. Drawing on, but not attempting any appraisal of, feminist work their "review restricts its critique to the 'mainstream' of studies by young men of slightly younger men". (1983:1). That review, however, does not itself focus evenly on gender issues. The work of Parsons, Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin, Matza and Downes are mainly criticised for failing to address the

class/economic issues. It is only where the sub-cultural tradition takes a marxist turn in Britain that Dorn and South concentrate fully on gender with the prompting of McRobbie (1980). Interestingly this is the point where Naffine drew a line - noting only in an endnote that a marxist approach is not examined "for the simple reason that the Left has shown little specific interest in the female offender" (1987:134).

The following discussion of Hall, Jefferson, Clarke, Willis, Phil Cohen, Corrigan and Hebdige draws on both Dorn and South (1983) and McRobbie (1980). Clearly these authors should be subject to the close reading given to Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin but since they did not specifically deal with masculinity they are necessarily dealt with here more cursorily, and as if they formed an identifiable school of thought. A development of this thesis would be a re-reading of the classics of sub-cultural studies around the issue of masculinity of both describer and described. As McRobbie notes:

Writing about sub-cultures isn't the same thing as being in one. Nonetheless, it is easy to see how it would be possible in sharing some of the same symbols - the liberating release of rock music, the thrill of speed, of alcohol or even football - to be blinded to some of its oppressive features. (1980:40)

Dorn and South add to McRobbie's list by drawing,

an analogy, here, between male sociology and male youth cultures...deliberately oafish behaviour, leather jackets, a mateyness between males that was reinforced by a lack of recognition of women's academic work, and sexual comments that would not have been misunderstood amongst Willis' lads (1983:21).<sup>6</sup>

*Resistance through Rituals* edited by Hall and Jefferson (1993) collects together the work of many of - and more than - those discussed by Dorn and South and McRobbie; it opens with a long theoretical chapter by Clarke, Hall, Jefferson and Roberts. That chapter sets out some useful distinctions between the classless 'common-sense' picture of Youth Culture and youth sub-cultures. Much of their analysis of shifts in the wider economy and local community

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6. This chapter and chapter 4 are, in part, an attempt to come to terms with my own 'oafish behaviour'.

remains resonant today. Indeed, the changes they described in the 70s sound convincing arguments for explaining crime twenty years later; certainly more convincing than explaining youth sub-cultures then. However, the intention here is not to take issue with whether their class analysis is necessary, appropriate or adequate but to tease out some of the issues of masculinity raised by them in *Resistance* and elsewhere.

Heidensohn takes issue with McRobbie's contentions in respect of these theorists, holding that "most of the work in this genre, like Cohen twenty years earlier, does acknowledge the importance of gender in various forms of 'masculinity' to the (male) youth culture" (1985:139). She illustrates this by quoting Clarke from *Resistance* on the importance of 'masculinity' and territoriality and community in explaining the behaviour of the skinheads he is discussing. However, it could also be said that the use of inverted commas around masculinity (here and in the quotes below) but not around the equally problematic terms 'territoriality' and 'community' are indicative of a certain distaste for a masculinity that runs counter to the politics and practice favoured by the left-wing, would-be-non-violent sociologist. More normal in this 'school' is, as Dom and South and McRobbie note, a scarcely disguised admiration and even "shared patterns of chauvinism between observer and observed" (Willis, 1978b:27). Those shared patterns can also effect other men in the field of observation. For instance, Willis (1978a:6) notes:

It should also be noted that the alternative standards constructed by 'the lads' are recognised by the teachers in a shadowy sort of way - at least in private. There were often admiring comments in the staff room about the sexual prowess of particular individuals from younger teachers, 'he's had more than me I can tell you'.

It may be the class perspective that prevents Clarke *et al* (1993) raising the issue until page 44 (the article runs from page 9 to 74) but it is interesting that when it does it does so in respect of "street-corner culture, with its massively 'masculine' focus".<sup>7</sup> Their next paragraph continues,

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7. The alluring alliterative momentum of "massive 'masculinity' " might be worth examining in its own right.



Any one of these strategies in the repertoire developed by young working-class boys will stand in complex relation to that of other 'peers'; to 'adult' strategies and solutions; to alternative positions in the same age spectrum (e.g. Skinheads vs. hippies); and to the dominant culture in its repertoire of control.

Thereafter the analysis returns to talk of classes and 'the young' or youth sub-cultures so boys get a brief mention but not in any gendered sense and girls no mention at all. Moreover, the word 'repertoire' suggests the unacknowledged influence of sex-role theory. The next mention of masculinity comes without the protective inverted commas but discussing the 'distinctive, different, stylistic' way that sub cultures relate to each other and the parent culture they note "the particular conception of masculinity and male dominance (reproduced in all the post-war youth sub-cultures)" (1993:53). The inverted commas may have gone but the unspoken attitude of the writers comes through. Worse though, in discussing differences in style, they find only similarity in masculinity yet fail to investigate. One explanation for this failure is their 'romanticism' about the working class (Young, 1975), or, more precisely, the men of the working class. Perhaps, influenced by Miller (1958), they saw male youth sub-cultures as overemphasising a masculinity that was otherwise not problematic in itself. Miller is not cited by them at this point but at several points in the section on style they talk of 'focal concerns'.

Though the writers of *Resistance* may romanticise the working class male youth sub culture its presence is only marked by discussions of various styles, leisure pursuits and occasional delinquency whereas when they turn to discuss the issue of whether there are middle class youth sub cultures they produce a chronological table of political and cultural events of the 'counter culture' in the U.K. and U.S. from 1965 "CND anti-Vietnam march" to the "Zen of motorcycle maintenance" (1993:58-59). Feminist women get several mentions. Mirroring Cohen's (1955) observations they note "Middle class youth remains longer than their working class peers 'in the transitional stage' " (Hall and Jefferson, 1993:60) which gives them time to develop sub cultures within the parent culture whereas working class youth quickly join the parent culture at their appropriate class position.

This initial discussion of 'masculinity' in the opening chapter of *Resistance* sets the scene for the specific criticisms of Dorn and South and McRobbie. After a standard introduction to the American and British literature on youth sub-cultures, much of which has already been discussed above, Dorn and South turn their attention to some specifics. They quote from Phil Cohen (1972) - also very influential on the opening chapter of *Resistance* - on how the 'respectable working class were caught between "the ideology of spectacular consumption" and "the traditional ideology of production, the so-called work ethic which centred on the idea that a man's dignity, his manhood even, was measured by the quantity or quality of his effort in production" (Cohen, 1972:45 in Dorn and South 1983:14) but note his analysis excludes "questions of conflicts between men and women, boys and girls...the 'problem' is unrelated to sexual divisions (1983:17).

Dorn and South are tough on the absence of girls "this simply won't do; attention was equally concentrated by and where the majority of sociologists - who were male - bothered to look" (1983:17) whereas women researchers such as Ann Campbell found "the routine and full involvement of girls in 'the whole' of youth culture activities" (1983:18). At this point they move on to discuss the work of Willis. It is at this point that McRobbie's own critique starts. As might be imagined from Willis' own acknowledgement of his 'observer' as sharer of chauvinism with the 'observed' that he does recognize some problems and incorporates some feminist insights but as Dorn and South note this "breaks the bounds of its own analysis" (1983:18). Briefly - and we shall return to this - Willis found that the working class boys he was studying for *Learning to Labour* resist the school through acts of delinquency and disruption but ironically and functionally this fits them for the manual jobs that capitalism requires they do. It also acts historically to remind us that even inadequately educated, badly behaved and poorly motivated students could get jobs then. It may be an irony that motor projects work by providing an industrial experience that is no longer available or relevant elsewhere. Marxist and capitalist might have seen the lads position as manipulators of material within a mode of production (ie working class) whereas now within the present mode of information they are rendered merely information receivers. When they joyride they become

part of the spectacle without shattering it.

Specifically the school, all it stands for, and any mental activity are not just seen as middle class institutions to be reacted against like Cohen's 'delinquent boys' but are perceived as 'cissy' whereas their own behaviour is tough. This toughness, of course, is seen to be homologous with the requirements of manual work. At this point Dorn and South rely on McRobbie in pointing out that despite this advance in relating masculinity and crime the authors they discuss still fail to think about how these 'macho' cultural values are passed down from father to son in a family that includes women and girls. The boys sexism is noted but reported in tones which fail to understand the fear they have of women and femininity (effeminacy). As an exposé it could claim to assist feminism but the complicit tone - compounded by his inattention to women as anything other than sex object or mother - reproduces sexism. McRobbie (1980) is rightly trenchant in her criticism of the language of the 'lads' that Willis studied - the calling of women teachers "cunt" and mock masturbation as a disruptive tactic in class.

Perhaps the reason for Heidensohn's kind treatment of Willis (1978b) is the sheer extent to which his work uses the words masculine, masculinity and 'macho'. Yet their usage does not suggest a complex engagement with the subject. 'Masculinity' is used in two ways: it is used descriptively of 'the lads' and analytically in respect of working class culture. Today the book can be read as "one of the early key texts dealing with masculinity and the forms of resistance it entails" (Mac An Ghaill, 1996:57) yet it does not come to terms with the masculinities of the 'earoles' (the conformist, but still working class, boys) far less that of the teachers or Willis himself.<sup>8</sup>

The contrast with Corrigan is instructive. Corrigan is rightly criticised for his introductory remark: "At this stage I would hope that the reaction of many ladies reading the book is fairly irate

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8. Connell (1987) too accepts Willis as concerned, *avant la lettre*, with the plurality of masculinities.



about my failure to mention girls at all to date" (1979:13).

He goes on to give the reasons that caused him to be "restricted to the problems of the working-class MALE adolescent experience of school" (emphasis in original, 14). Despite the capitalised emphasis he makes very little of their maleness or issues of masculinity at all. This casual attitude towards gender continues today but the advance of feminism is such that it requires more explanation. Here is Stanley (1996:146), in a footnote, specifically on the subject of joyriding (and computer hacking):

...I do not specifically deal with the gender element in this analysis. This is not to neglect the importance of the construction of masculinity which is an element in computer hacking and joyriding, but rather my concern here is emphasize the theoretical dynamics of these acts of excess within an alternative remit of analysis. This may be a somewhat artificial response to feminist criticism. I do not deny the importance of gender but rather pursue lines of enquiry regarding the activation of strategies of resistance which may become available to all and which represent moments of de-regulated desire and political resistance deliberately not universal strategies such as feminism.

This is not good enough. Quite obviously joyriding is a 'de-regulated desire' but none of the fieldwork or literature reveals any evidence of any 'strategy'. Indeed the literature and fieldwork strongly suggest that instead of 'resistance' joyriding is a submission to car culture. To suggest that joyriding might offer a 'strategy of resistance for all', including women, is to embrace the advertisers' (and Mrs Thatcher's) 'Great Car Economy'. It is not even the 'feminism' of the film *Thelma and Louise* but that of the Peugeot advert's pastiche of the film. Stanley therefore joins the long tradition of male writers on crime that romanticise it.

Turning to Hebdige, Mc Robbie notes that whilst he sets his work within the framework set out in Clarke's chapter in *Resistance* on 'Style' he actually runs counter to the concern for class shown in that volume by concentrating on the play of signifiers and 'race' and presumes no real political intent beneath style. What they do share is the method borrowed from Levi-Strauss of *bricolage*. Moreover, he is criticised for ignoring women in the field of 'fashion' to which they are traditionally consigned. The styles he discusses, and indeed all youth sub-cultural styles, are male styles. It is worth considering whether joyriding has or is a style but this

will be taken up in Chapter 8.

'Masculinity' features early in Clarke's Chapter and a discussion of skinhead chauvinism concludes it. Save for a discussion of the effeminacy of 'mod' culture the rest of the discussion is about style in the abstract or, if concrete examples are given, it is about 'teds', 'mods' or 'skins' but only male styles of dress are discussed.

The ethos of 'masculinity' in football culture, for example, cannot be understood outside the homologous relation it bears to the masculine focus and organization of much industrial production: a 'man' like a footballer, has to be able to "take some stick and keep coming back for more"...One of the most complex things in working class leisure and sport is to understand fully this combination of both release from and, reproduction of, the rhythms of work in apparently free activities of leisure. (1993:176)

We won't dwell on the inverted commas round 'masculinity' and 'man' but absence from around "masculine" but here note the assumption that whilst a man's masculinity could not - no crude marxism here please - be reduced to his class position it was homologous with it. However, is the interpretation right in its own terms? Does the man show the same emotional commitment to his team as to his work? Is he a consumer or a producer?

Clarke's commitment to a class based analysis leads him to assume that the stylish *bricolage* of the young men he describes is made up from "commodities that exist in the market" (1993:178) and the resulting style represents in mediated form the material base of the culture. Interestingly he assumes that the commodities "must be financially within the reach of the style creators" (1993:178). The sub-cultures he was studying clearly bought the clothes in which they outraged the parent culture, rather than stealing them from stores or each other ('taxing').

Clarke notes that "the process of forming the group's identity is as much due to 'negative' reactions to other groups, events, ideas, etc." (1993:180) and gives the examples of mods versus rockers and skinheads versus hippies or the system more generally. The possibility that the 'negative reaction' may be against girls or femininity arises but is missed. He quotes a

survey of "Margate offenders" that emphasize the gendered language of derision between Mods and Rockers. For instance, "Rockers see Mods as effeminate. 'They can wear skirts if they like, so long as I don't pick one up as a girl' " (Barker-Little survey 1964:121 in Clarke 1993:181)

This is taken not to be evidence of different masculinities - Mod and Roker - but just an insult - a censure - (Sumner, 1990a and 1990b) which evidences the oppositional nature of the subcultures. We might want to know what anxieties the Roker was demonstrating - the fear of being queer or the fear of sleeping with a Mod? The Chapter concludes with the claim that the sexism of the skinheads - yes, he had noticed it - was related to the sub-culture.

One of the aspects of the subculture's lifestyle was a stress on traditional images of 'masculine' behaviour, and one of the forms which this image took was a 'collective chauvinism' towards girls around the subculture. These girls, belonging to the collective world of the group were "available" for collective or individual sexual experimentation, and were known as "slags" or "scrubbers" - distinguishing them from the "good girls". It is only while the leisure arena, and the subcultural form in which it is lived out, *remains* the dominant focus of the member's lives that this collective chauvinism can be maintained. (1993:190 emphasis in original)

No doubt the subculture was an arena for, and gave support to, their 'collective chauvinism' but it is difficult to imagine that it would not find support in other subcultures or in the parent culture.

Turning now to Hebdige we find that again the word masculine appears regularly and the discussion of various sub-cultures, including an emerging gay culture, might have been the starting point for a consideration of masculinities; including the assumed masculinity against which Hebdige measures others. In common with all the authors discussed, even on this most 'feminine' topic of style, Hebdige takes the stylistic signification of the sub-culture to be worn by its male adherents. The purpose here is not to attempt an assessment of whether Hebdige is correct in his reading or to replay the criticisms of feminists but to see where Hebdige might have started on the project of dragging masculinities into the criminological gaze. In addition to the mentions of masculinity and the ways in which he could have got into the subject of



masculinities Hebdige makes frequent use of metaphors of theft and borrowing which could be applied to joyriding. This can be related to the discussion of Hartley (1994) in Chapter 5.

The first point at which Hebdige might have engaged with this is his own, frequent, engagement with the work of Jean Genet. Genet is quoted regularly for his criminal and sexual transgressions of straight society. Hebdige does not consider whether the 'queer' lifestyle of Genet is compatible with the criminal lifestyle. All of the authors discussed so far have implicitly or explicitly associated masculinity with crime but that masculinity is implicitly heterosexual. Just as it is a stereotype to position women as passive and therefore not criminal so the stereotypical passivity of the gay man should exclude criminality. These are issues that Hebdige could have explored but gay men and ambiguous sexuality are just used to celebrate style or be the subject of the skinhead's 'queer-bashing', which just serves as a change from 'paki-bashing'.

In discussing 'reggae and rastafarianism' he quickly passes over the 'rude boy' - "the lone delinquent pitched hopelessly against an implacable authority" to the "Rastafarian who broke the Law in more profound and subtle ways" (1979:37). Here we see Hebdige's political concerns displaced from the working class onto the consciousness of the Rastas. He does not see that the 'rude boy', the police(men), the Rasta and the Law share common elements of masculinity. One reason is that Hebdige is not only in love with style, but particularly black styles. He lets others speak for him, quoting George Melly's "For us the whole coloured race was sacred" (Melly, 1971 in Hebdige, 1979:44). He shares "the whole mythology of the Black Man and *his* Culture ... being developed by sympathetic liberal observers" (1979:47, emphasis added) Or, as Adrian Mitchell has it in his poem *Goodbye*.

He breathed in air, he breathed out light.  
Charlie Parker was my delight.

Hebdige sees style everywhere floating free of class in an endless chain of signification but it does have an unexplored relationship to masculinity; for instance, "mods preferred to

maintain the stylish contours of an impeccable 'French crew' with invisible lacquer rather than with the obvious grease favoured by the more overtly masculine rockers" (1979:52). He immediately returns to discussing mod style rather than question himself on what is so 'overtly masculine' about rockers or why he thinks - probably rightly - that his reader also knows and also does not question.

The rockers receive scant attention as they are not sufficiently stylish, perhaps, because they are 'overtly masculine' for Hebdige's main interest is in

a more furtive and ambiguous sense of masculinity could be seen to operate. It was the Black Man who made all this possible: by a kind of sorcery, a sleight of hand, through 'soul', he has stepped outside the white man's comprehension (1979:54).

Throughout the book it is clear that Hebdige is fascinated by the possibility that the Black Man, the mod or the punk might have discovered that masculinity which was still masculine but not 'overt' like the mods or the skinheads "dour 'machismo' " (1979:55).

Both Clarke and Hebdige in their different ways are actually talking about masculinities but do so in a coded fashion with Clarke choosing class and Hebdige 'style', particularly black style, as the language in which to do so. It is an irony that the Probation Officers of Los Angeles County Probation Department 'police' the gang affiliations of probationers by monitoring their dress and breaching them for 'dressing down' (Miller:1995)

It is necessary to complete the discussion of criminology's relation to masculinity by examining labelling perspectives. Where sub-cultural theorists have sought to either explain criminality or celebrate resistance the labelling perspective specifically sees criminality as socially constructed so might have been expected to note the social construction of gender. As Leonard says,

There are conspicuous entry points where labelling might have begun a thorough analysis of women and crime, but once again this analysis was not forthcoming. (1982:81)

The labelling perspective took a very idealist, not to say Idealistic, social constructivist approach. The perspective effectively debunked the pretensions of the agents of social control but remained mystified as to why its 'hippy' theories failed to inform official practice. It should have been able to note the gendered labelling used to enforce sex-roles. Indeed, Becker (1973:17) throws out this thought "it is true in many respects that men make the rules for women in our society". He adds in parenthesis "though in America this is changing rapidly" and, as Heidensohn (1985:138), notes fails to "catch the thought himself".

However, the example of Rock's interactionist contention (reported in Morris, 1987:9) that Becker's marijuana user is only 'nominally male' then this is perhaps asking too much. Indeed, as Naffine (1987) shows the jazz musicians Becker studies are male whose 'square' wives and families threaten to force them to leave the business or, at least go commercial: nothing 'nominal' here. Becker's appreciation of his subjects is total. He combines the 'college boy' and 'corner boy' without the danger.

Connell (1987) sets out a critique of current theorising about gender and power and specifically rejecting the radical sex-role theory of some feminists with its immutable and always opposed categories of men and women seeks to build a practice-based theory. He seeks to build on the work of Bourdieu and Giddens and others who focus on the interconnections between "structure and practice" (1987:62) which allow for "multiple femininities and masculinities" (1987:63). However, Connell argues that the tightness of the link between structure and practice - particularly in Giddens 'duality of structure' - fails to allow for historical change. That is 'multiple femininities and masculinities' are not fixed - there are no Victorian patriarchs left. Messerschmidt (1997) develops Connell and Giddens to show how 'race', class and sex can be salient in explaining both crime and desistance from it. For instance, Malcolm X's masculinity embraced white hegemonic forms of masculinity, then a black hustler masculinity that demanded 'respect'. Finally he desisted from crime (though not from being criminalised) in embracing a muslim masculinity.



These 'multiple femininities and masculinities' are lived within and create the three main structures of: labour, power and cathexis which operate at the level of the 'gender order' - "the term for the structural inventory of an entire society" (Connell, 1987:99 ) and at the level of an institution - the 'gender regime'. He interprets 'institution' broadly, for instance, the street is place where women are harassed and men hang around and "talk about sport and cars" (1987:133), sometimes observed by a male sociologist (e.g. Whyte, 1943 or Parker, 1974a)

In practice any analysis would relate the observed practice - 'doing' masculinity - within a gender regime to the 'hegemonic masculinity' found within the gender order. The sexual division of labour is covered by Connell's structure of labour. Power is more complex. Men tend to dominate positions of power particularly within what Connell (1987:109) calls the hierarchies of: 'institutionalised violence' like the police; those of industry; the state and crucially connecting with the working class emphasis on toughness and machinery.

Significant is his contention that,

the most striking feature of this connection is the extent to which it is mediated by machinery, especially motor-vehicles. The gradual displacement of other transport systems by this uniquely violent and environmentally destructive technology is both a means and measure of the tacit alliance between the state and corporate elite and working class hegemonic masculinity. (1987:109-110)

Connell gives some hints as to how his work might be applied to criminality and to attempts to control it:

The state both institutionalises hegemonic masculinity and expends great energy in controlling it. The objects of repression, e.g. 'criminals', are generally younger men themselves involved in the practice of violence, with a social profile quite like that of the immediate agents of repression, the police or the soldiers. However, the state is not all of a piece. The military and coercive apparatus has to be understood in terms of relationships between masculinities: the physical aggression of front-line troops or police, the authoritative masculinity of commanders, the calculative rationality of technicians, planners and scientists. (1987:128-129)

This not only suggests that the hegemonic masculinity of the gender order may comprise contesting blocs - aggression, authority and rationality - but that it combines to defeat the aggression, disrespect and irrational subordinate masculinity of the criminal. Connell's work

has been highly influential on those trying to think through what the possibility of multiple masculinities might mean for criminology. Many of the contributors to Newburn and Stanko's (1994) edited collection *Just Boys Doing Business: Men, masculinities and crime* relate their work to Connell's.

Jefferson (in Newburn and Stanko) problematises the assumption of any smooth socialisation of boys into the predominant conception of masculinity. He notes the gap between ideal and men's actual performance and the anxieties caused to men in striving, but never achieving masculinity. He seeks to explore the internal and external worlds of men and the relationship between them. For Jefferson, the key thinker on the externalities of male subjectivity is Connell but makes the points about structure - followed up below - that lead some to prefer a Foucauldian approach to the social production of what it means to be masculine. He recognises this makes "a systematic understanding of the social whole all but impossible" (1994:16). As this discursive move endangers the subject Jefferson turns to psycho-analytical attempts to understand the inner world.

Rejecting Freud's sexism and ahistoricism but defending the applicability of his theories to the social, Jefferson builds on Freud's idea of a dynamic unconscious and Lacan's reinterpretations which insist on the non-unitary nature of the subject in which the unconscious is structured like language. Moreover, that language - its signifiers and signifieds - are related to a primary signifier, the phallus which represents the Law of the Father. So far, so Freudian, so biological, so conservative but there are other versions of psycho-analytic thought. Jefferson sets out the attempt by Hollway to combine a Foucauldian discourse theory with a psycho-analytic theory where Lacan's phallo-centrism is contained by Klein's maternal emphasis. As he says:

The social order, therefore, is comprised of a multiplicity of discursive practices and the different power relations these inscribe. These produce a corresponding multiplicity of subject positions, all differentially accessed to power. (1994:25)

Moreover, “the production of subject positions is not sufficient for theorising subjectivity” (1994:25) that is, why do we “ ‘chose’ to invest in or identify with one discursive position rather than an another?” (1994:25). It is here that Lacanian desire for the mother/Other enters the scene but stripped of its phallic universalism which reconnects the Symbolic order to historical discourses. Moreover, Klein’s concepts of ‘splitting’ and ‘projection’ are incorporated to show how the ego seeks to prevent being contaminated by ‘bad’ parts by splitting them off and projecting them onto others. Whether anxious about the loss of the breast or death this fear of lack can be seen to fit with Lacan’s idea of desire.<sup>9</sup>

That is, specific discourses provide the subject positions and the public signs of them but the individuals desires for or needs for protection from anxiety are unique and may conflict with the available subject positions so splitting off the anxiety-making parts and projection on to others is required. By which means Jefferson explains that “heterosexual men often disown their feelings of vulnerability and dependency by saddling their partners with them” (1994:27). Jefferson recognises that, however sophisticated this is, it cannot overcome the fact of near-universal male dominance. Jefferson concludes that male anxiety is particularly relevant to considering violence against women and children and many of Newburn and Stanko’s contributors concentrate on what might be seen as typically male crimes or ways of dealing with crime (police and prison). The chapter on victimisation usefully opens up the issue of male victimisation but, of course, this is at the hands of other men. Only Levi breaks the pattern with his discussion of white-collar crime. None of these is directly comparable with joyriding, which could be seen as violent but is also not specifically directed against women yet lacks the rationality of white collar crime.

### Conclusion

Connell uses the term structures to describe the inter-locking effects and causes of labour,

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9. As kd lang sings “Here beneath my skin, Constant craving, has always been” (*Ingénue* (1992) Sire Records).



power and cathexis. He argues "that these three structures are empirically the major structures of the field of gender relations." (1987:97) yet also recognises they may not be all the structures nor that all are necessary. Despite his empirical certitude he says his "argument rests on the gentler, more pragmatic but perhaps more demonstrable claim that with a framework like this we can come to a serviceable understanding of current history" (1987:97). It is the usefulness of Connell's pragmatism that has seen it so widely taken up within the study of men and masculinities. However, the terminology of structures even when so heavily bracketed with practice may tempt the too pragmatic to simply take the structures and slot masculinities into their appropriate pigeon holes. For this reason 'discourses' of labour, power and cathexis might be preferable to 'structures'. Whilst discourses have a Foucauldian association which brings its own problems they also lead away from the pragmatic and allow for a more complex understanding of the possible and changing interconnections between Connell's three 'structures'.

As Jefferson says "it might prove useful to utilize Connell's three structures as principles for organising the sites of gendered oppression requiring discursive deconstruction" (1994:28). There is also a practical point here. The social observer will often only have access to the structures or discourses that position the individual and not to the meaning of the choices of the individual that might not even be available to them unless in therapy. This has been my position in respect of joyriding. The discourses or structures that create subject positions within the gender order and within car culture are set out but often the only individual to whom these can be related is my own fractured subjectivity (see Chapter 4). Again, as Jefferson says, "Discourses and structures point towards societal and institutional levels of analysis: desiring subjects point towards the importance of life-history research" (1994:29). Joyriders, like all car-drivers are clearly 'desiring subjects' and car advertising clearly subjects them/us to desire.

In conclusion it is, perhaps, worth examining Walklate's conclusions on masculinity and crime.

How and under what circumstances masculinity is the key variable in committing crime, and how and under what circumstances social class might be the key explanatory variable, are questions which remain to be answered. Raising them clearly posits a theoretical and empirical agenda informed by a concern with the focussed specificity of the relationship between particular crimes and particular contexts rather than a search for broad (and brave) assertions. (1995:182-183)

She is concerned that “the co-usage of the term masculinity/ies becomes the catch-all term for both understanding and explaining different kinds of law-breaking behaviour occurring in different structural and material circumstances” (1995:190). In this respect her concerns are too narrowly criminological. Nothing in this thesis is intended to use masculinities as a catch-all to explain crimes. Like feminism, and in support of feminism, the new sociological interest in masculinities problematises the study of society, disrupts notions of the universal man and of the men who study society.

The thesis presented here uses concepts of masculinities to highlight issues around car culture, joyriding, the criminalisation of joyriding, efforts to treat and punish joyriding and also to interrupt the smooth flow of research into and theorising about crime. It is in this sense that this work is transgressive. It goes beyond criminology as currently constituted - even in its radical and critical versions - not to explain joyriding but to embrace the facts of joyriding and its intimate connection with car culture. Concepts of masculinities have been used throughout not just to throw some light on crime or deviance but especially to criticize the very practice of criminology from within by a middle-aged man studying young men and not from without, like Smart (1990). If it had remained within conventional criminological bounds then it could only attempt to explain crime and fall victim to Walklate’s doubts about using masculinity as an explanation and to Smart’s wider criticism of criminology.

Just as criminology has avoided or badly explained women’s crime and the masculinities of men’s crime so the sociology of masculinity has failed to address itself to the issue of crime and deviance. It may therefore be that where Smart has taken refuge in the sociology of law others must take refuge in the sociology of masculinities whilst awaiting the post-disciplinary.

## CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A flash car cruising down the Street  
going really fast Just Missing My feet

I came round the Second corner  
When all of a Sudden I hit My friend Lorna

I stole a car it was red  
then all of a Sudden Lorna Was dead.

(anonymous response by a ten year old to the drama workshops of Theatre Adad - fieldnotes)

It has been one of the organising principles of this thesis that the UK has a car culture which is influenced both by the material products of the car culture and media images of the United States of America. However, there are real differences between the two cultures, not least the space available for roads and attitudes to the regulation of cars and driving. This car culture both produces and is produced by the use of cars in this country. That use includes those uses which are known as joyriding and those that might be known as joyriding, were it not in cars owned by the user. In the next section some of the key points emerging from Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are discussed. This will lead in turn to a discussion of the policy issues and to the further research that might need to inform policy decisions and also the research needed to further the thesis, irrespective of policy relevance.

In Chapter 5 a range of theoretical positions were explored to see what they might say about joyriding as it might be popularly defined. In conclusion, left realism was seen to be an appropriate framework within which to locate an explanation of joyriding as crime but a left realism that took account of the emerging sociology of masculinities and the pervasiveness of car culture. Such has been the concentration in this thesis on the society point of the 'square of crime' (rather than the victim, the offender or criminal justice system) that it has overflowed into other areas of sociology and beyond which have transgressed criminology. These transgressions, particularly consideration of green issues has lead me to define joyriding sometimes polemically as an expressive car use which would also make connections with its



emotional cousin 'road rage' and the carefree motoring that car and petrol adverts promise.

As Naffine notes of her book:

Feminists have never been good observers of disciplinary boundaries and the benefits of their indiscipline are revealed here... It is an effort to persuade the members of the discipline of the intellectual benefits of a more modest and self-reflexive criminology which acknowledges its exclusions, its limitations and its silences. (1997:12)

These too are my ideals. Like the joyrider I have not observed the proprieties. I have taken from a number of perspectives and disciplines. I have taken and abandoned standpoints. My initial gaze was upon the joyrider, but quickly moved to those who worked with them and theorised in a limited way about them. The experience of fieldwork refined these positions. I became aware that rather than studying the criminality (that criminologists are supposed to study) I was studying men and that my own masculinity could not be denied. I therefore turned the gaze upon myself - my own masculinity, occasional criminality and ongoing, but quieter, pleasure in car use - which lead in turn to the consideration of theories of masculinities which helped me return my gaze not to the criminal but to criminology and criminologists. That is "an alternative approach that incorporates reflexive textual analysis into a wider collective project" (Hopper, 1995:58). Nelken's reflexivity "invites the theorist to be more *reflective* about the point and manner of his or her theorising" (1995:9).

For the political project of liberating women "feminists have insisted that there can be no radical separation between the criminologist and the objects of her inquiry" (Naffine, 1997:29). However, for pro-feminist reasons I decline to align with my fellow man so to aid self-reflexivity I adopt a green standpoint and, following Stein and Plummer's (1996) call for 'a more queer sociology', also adopt/adapt a queer one to deconstruct my own position and those of others. This influence can be seen in the analysis of culture and the recognition that car use is about desire or 'delight' as Richards has it (1994)

Like Naffine I am critical of both the empirical and appreciative strands of male criminology, and

like her I do not deny the importance of both. I have not been empirical because I accept the work of the empiricists as set out in Chapters 2 and 3. I recognize the value of appreciative studies discussed in Chapter 7 but am concerned not to take the standpoint of the joyrider because there have been enough views from the boys.

Of appreciative studies, Naffine says:

It is, therefore, unlikely that these efforts of the new men of criminology to bridge the cultural gulf between themselves and the working class offender were ever entirely successful. Certainly, there was no real sense of the criminologist going native, abandoning the privileges and cultural advantages of the academic male (and neither has this academic female). (1997:42)

Her parenthetical comment signals that she is not claiming a superior understanding to those who 'were there' or 'got their hands dirty'. She is suggesting that, perhaps, they should have 'gone native'. My experience of fieldwork was not sufficient for me to speak about youthful working class joyriders, let alone for them. However, I recognised that I was already a native of the world of men, car users and consumer of cultural products such as car adverts and film. Indeed I had during this time become a native of the world of criminology. It is for these reasons that much of Chapter 7 is given over to unpicking the masculinities portrayed in criminological work - the masculinity involved in being a criminal and that involved in being a criminologist. As Naffine says:

the academics' desire to find rationality and purpose in the deviance of youth (despite its surface appearance of senseless crime) was possibly itself a desire to find in those youth the very qualities which the academic male still most admired in himself - intellectual reason rather than, say, animal spirits or something deeply alien, perhaps deeply different which could not be encapsulated in an academic treatise. (1997:43)

Men (and women) are offered two overlapping masculine positions within the criminological family - the Father or the Brother.<sup>1</sup> The Father is usually associated with the authoritarianism of the State and its correctional project - though more benign roles are possible (which might be

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1. Some women rightly solve this by resort to feminism. Clearly some the criticisms of brotherly criminology could be made of feminists and talk of a sisterly or auntie criminology. Given the ongoing gender power differentials that would be premature.

thought of as the Uncle). In my anti-authoritarianism I am a bad son so might be expected to take the part of the other bad sons - joyriders, in this case - and be their brother. The influence of feminism and a concern for the environment has made me wish to avoid both this hegemonic and subaltern (sibling) masculinity. The experience of becoming a father during fieldwork brought home some of these contradictions but reinforced my resolution not to follow the two models for masculinity (and their associated research methods) that criminology offers. However, my intention is not simply to invert previous criminologies in offering a new paradigm. The intention is to recognize the reality of crime but also the reality of environmental pollution. Joyriding should not and cannot be collapsed into car use or car culture but the risk of appearing to do so has been taken in this thesis to emphasize continuity and generality.

Those whose cars are stolen are not only victims of the thieves but also of their dependency on their cars which has been constructed through the discourse of advertising and the material utility of private transport. Crime and fear of crime and the unreliability of public transport amplify that utility.

The cultural analyses of car culture hinted at in earlier chapters and explored more fully in this chapter might be called post-modern. That would be mistaken. My relativism in respect of the closeness of joyriding to other aspects of car culture is part of a wider critique of that car culture. Like Naffine's use of Foucault and Derrida to deconstruct rape my 'linguistic turn' does not signal an abandonment of realism. She criticises left realism for its failure to read feminism and its assumption that taking crimes against women seriously was sufficient.<sup>2</sup> I think that these faults are remediable and see this thesis as partially redressing this "major omission from the writings of realists who express a sympathy with feminism is any interest in the connection between men, masculinity and crime." (Naffine, 1997:28-29)

In Chapter 6 it was concluded from both the literature and observation that motor projects can work but that they do not do so simply by the provision of the car but by offering a male

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2. Naffine is particularly scathing about John Lea's views on rape (1997:66).



workspace. That is, in the absence of paid work or networks of family and friends, projects offer a chance for young men to relate to each other, to other men in the project and a wider male world - through the common language of the car. If this were forty years ago then this would be enough. For some supporters of motor projects this is enough. In a narrow criminal justice sense this is enough but today the concerns of women and for the environment demand a voice too. These two concerns have given a focus to the concept of car culture used in this thesis. Within car culture joyriding, other motoring offences and motor projects do not appear as separate legal and criminological offences or deviance on the one hand and appropriate 'alternatives' to custody or community penalty on the other but of a piece.

Lets be clear, many joyriders - like many young and old men - are sexist, racist and homophobic. Their interest in cars - whether in: their external symbolism of success and power; the internal working of the combustion engine; the means of getting from A to B or of thumbing a nose at male or maternal authority - is anti-social at the level of the individual victim, communities and ultimately the planet. Many of those that work with them are not well disposed to feminism or to environmental concerns but anyone who owns or uses a car cannot absolutely condemn them or attempts to help them that draw on the common car culture.

From a feminist and environmental perspective it is very tempting to reject motor projects as macho and environmentally unfriendly - they are. The subject of the environment is too large to tackle in this concluding chapter but a few words on working with men are appropriate here. There are now projects seeking to work on issues of masculinity with young male offenders. The London Borough of Sutton's Pitstop Programme takes joyriders away on an adventure training week in collaboration with Deerbolt Young Offenders Institution and the Durham Fire Service. It only uses cars in a staged rescue to bring home the 'reality' of car accidents to the young men. It has yet to be evaluated but its input on issues around masculinity are to be applauded. Youth workers deal with the age group most at risk of taking cars without consent; some are now addressing these issues. Boyle and Curtis (1995) set out guidelines for

working with boys that include the prescription to get the work with girls established first. This is obviously a problem with motor projects where both the self-selected and authority-referred client group will be overwhelmingly male. Just as this thesis has had to take into account issues of gender without including women so motor projects will need to pull off the difficult trick of working on gender largely in the absence of women.

It would be unfair to bus unwilling women or girls in and not all projects have women workers - and it would be unfair to expect her to represent 'Women'. Motor projects, much like domestic violence projects, will need men to work on men and masculinities (Newburn and Mair, 1996). These concerns even appear in the conclusions of Graham and Bowling's study (1995:xiv) for 'encouraging desistance from offending:

Suggestions include bridging schemes, such as the French system of foyers, which provide temporary accommodation coupled with training and employment; better preparation for early fatherhood and for parenting teenagers; and encouraging fathers as well as other male adults to support and 'parent' young adult males in the community and provide responsible masculine role models.

Leaving aside the residuary sex-role content it was clear from fieldwork that motor projects provided elements of training and employment and the opportunity for young men to be 'parented' or even to 'brother' each other. It is these elements that need to be drawn out.

The reading of discourse and psycho-analysis allied to the work of Connell discussed by Jefferson and set out in Chapter 7 would need a life history approach to set out the differing masculinities of joyriders and other car users but the structural elements can be used to suggest that one of the reasons why joyriding and road rage are condemned with such vehemence is that there is a desire to split off the 'badness' of our own driving and project it onto others. Moreover, a rising green consciousness makes us aware that bad driving extends beyond failing to signal, jumping red lights and exceeding the speed limit but the recognition that merely by driving we may be 'bad'. Car use not only relates to Connell's structures of labour and power but also cathexis. We are emotionally attached to our cars -

roadrage and joyriding are, in part, emotional responses (Groombridge, 1996 and 1998).

Moreover, contrary to the nostalgia of both marxist and conservative cultural critics motorists increasingly experience directly the fact that the car never had a use-value and has become an alienated object of purely exchange value. The car never had a use value, its value has always been symbolic. As the figures for the UK's 'car dependency' show the use has been manufactured - Downes (1966:204) noted the theft of cars by thieves "pressured by commercial-ideological forces into thinking he needs one" and Pearce and Thornton (1980:12) said "the desire to possess a car is knowingly implanted" . Whilst advertising may have become increasingly postmodern the car is profoundly modern. These issues are discussed more fully below.

Discussing the depiction of masculine heroism in contemporary film Sparks expresses disappointment that, 'no currently important criminological position numbers the assimilation of screen imagery in any very prominent place among its explanatory resources' (Sparks 1996:351). He goes on to use film theory, specifically feminist film theory, to explore the appeal of such heroes and the light this throws on the debate about 'violence'.<sup>3</sup>

Such contributions could be seen in terms of a 'transgressive criminology' (Cain 1990a) but also in terms of an emergent 'cultural criminology' which Ferrell & Sanders claim:

...provides criminologists the opportunity to enhance their own perspectives on crime with insights from other fields, while at the same time providing for their colleagues in cultural studies the sociology of culture, media studies, and elsewhere invaluable perspectives on crime, criminalisation and their relationships to cultural and political processes. Bending or breaking the boundaries of criminology to construct a cultural criminology in this sense does not undermine contemporary criminology as much as it expands and enlivens it. (1995:17)

The influence of early British cultural studies (for instance, Cohen 1973; Willis 1978; Hebdige

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3. Though Groombridge (1995a) makes use of similar theories to understand CCTV's connection to Hitchcock's *Rear Window*.



1979 and Hall and Jefferson 1993) on Ferrell & Sanders and their contributors is such that it might be better to speak of a re-emergence of cultural criminology.

The following discussion of joyriding and gender in advertising is offered as a heuristic. It is not argued that car advertising explains, or causes, joyriding but car adverts provide a useful insight into 'car culture' and some of the changes going on within it. Sometimes they can be seen to follow developments within 'car culture' or borrow from the wider popular culture. That is the advertising media constitutes and is constituted. For instance, a recent set of VW television adverts for the Golf Match, which might be called respectively 'Sales Rep' and 'Housewife' clearly take their style from the BBC TV series the *A to Z of Motoring* which interviewed people about their cars whereas a series of Peugeot 106 adverts takes its visual style and even some plotlines from the film *Thelma and Louise*. Connell notes that in 1984 he saw a poster that crudely appealed to masculine violence. It showed a car being fired from a pistol with the caption 'The Trigger is under your right foot' (1987:133). The emphasis on speed - in visuals, soundtrack and slogans - has become less popular though it was only a few years ago that Vauxhall advertised the Calibra on posters by juxtaposing it with a roadside speed camera.

The Golf Match is the largest car marketed at women and the advert is explicit. The woman is plain and in her mid to late forties but both the action and dialogue indicate her husband is plainer still. He is boring and miserly. He resists purchasing the car so she buys it and her lines are delivered from the driving seat as she drives. She has clearly spent over £10,000 of her, or their, money on something for herself. Previous Golf adverts have been criticised for showing a woman throwing off her wedding ring but deciding to keep the car.

Other adverts for smaller cars often feature women as potential owners or drivers. Ford have recently advertised their smallest car, the Fiesta, by showing a young attractive female secretary taking the initiative to drive to Paris to meet her (female!) boss to deliver the slides that the boss had overlooked and would need to give a presentation. Whilst both women are

attractive this advert otherwise appears to subvert the normal boss/secretary gender expectations; and why they might be in Paris. A lesbian subtext seems unlikely given that heterosexual women have only just become targeted as purchasers of cars rather than lounging seductively over their bonnets.<sup>4</sup> However, since the two protagonists are women and no male character is wheeled on to assure us that one of the women is, or will be, 'his' the potential for a lesbian reading is not dispelled. Adverts by Ford for the next car up in the range, the Escort, also feature a lot of women but they are talking about a man called Alex - seen driving the car homophonically called the LX - and having fun at the expense of their exasperated male boss who wants the car or - the queer reading is possible - does he want the man? Alex appears straight - the women fancy him - but the boss is ineffectual and held in contempt by the women who tease him with sightings of the car (man?).

In the sketchy 'readings' above the possibilities of various masculinities and femininities are raised to show that 'queer' readings are possible by reading 'across the grain'. The absence of black or Asian drivers or passengers is so total that it is not possible to read the adverts for hidden black themes. Indeed, recently black groups complained about the latest Vauxhall Astra advert. It features 2,000 babies being addressed by their 'leader' in a parody of a political rally about the safety virtues of the car (they should demand not one, but two side impact bars). None of the babies appears to be from an ethnic minority.<sup>5</sup>

The 'readings' that follow the themes of gender and joyriding are explored by concentrating on the Peugeot 106 *Thelma and Louise* adverts and the recent Nissan Micra campaign. From time to time reference will be made to earlier adverts for the same car or to other adverts for other cars where there are similar elements, suggestive of a shared discourse. It will also be necessary to refer to other advertised products and to give some brief description of the 'plot'

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4. A report for the motor retailers, Cowie, (The Times, 20 July 1996) showed that women felt patronised by most motor advertising finding the Peugeot 306 'Nice car - won't you show me what it can do' both memorable (though not the make!) and insulting.

5 The advertising agency claimed (Guardian 12 June 1996) that few parents came forward in response to their advert for babies.



as adverts are too ephemeral for it to be assumed - as other texts might be - that they will be well known to all audiences. Moreover, whilst the adverts often feature foreign locations only adverts that have appeared on UK television are discussed here.

There have been a series of TV adverts for the Nissan Micra. The earliest showed a woman throwing a guitar and a record player out of a beachside house. A man arrives in a car to witness this. There is only music - no dialogue - and then, the voice-over 'Ask before you borrow it'. Clearly he has borrowed her car. Other adverts in the series show a man arriving at a mansion in the car, a sexily dressed woman and he devour fruit - and each other in mutually lustful gazes - and make to go upstairs when she produces a pair of handcuffs. A sophisticated man he merely raises an eyebrow. She cuffs him to the bannister before going upstairs - alone! Cut to the mirror, on which is written, in lipstick, 'Ask before you borrow it'. Another for the Micra 'Vibe' has a young man driving the car and suffering pains that distract him from his driving and eventually cause him to stop the car and leap out in pain - but also laughing. He 'knows', and we see, that his girlfriend has a 'voodoo' doll of him in which she is sticking pins. The closing music is an update of the theme tune to the sixties TV series *Bewitched* and again the advert finishes with the admonition, 'Ask before you borrow it'. He too, has failed to ask his girlfriend before 'borrowing' it. In the advert for the Micra 'Hollywood' a man is blown up and engulfed in flames. We discover that he is a stuntman only when he lands safely and steps from his fireproof suit. He drives home to be thrown out of the window into the swimming pool by a woman. The slogan reminds him (male viewers) 'Ask before you borrow it'. The most recent poster campaign repeats the mantra, 'Ask before you borrow it' over a man clutching his groin in pain.

The slogan 'Ask before you borrow it' may also be intended to echo a recent sportswear advert which has Charles Berkeley, a black basketball superstar, praising the product before suggesting, not that we buy it but that we 'Earn them'. Now this can be construed as referring to the protestant work ethic - work hard to buy the things you need - or more directly to the meaning of work in athletic terms - to work out, to train - which itself can be related back to



capitalist rationality. However, it is more likely that the slogan refers to the practice of urban youth who short-circuit the economic system by stealing sportswear, particular expensive trainers. An irony, of course, is that the majority of those who wear athletic gear - stolen or not - have already short-circuited the athletic system. They have borrowed - or in stronger language, stolen - the image of the athlete. They need only to wear the gear to show that they are athletes, that they work out. Possession is nine tenths of the law; if we have got them then we must have earned them. Whether trainers or cars, both are texts to be consumed, 'read' or 'taken without consent'.

Clearly these women are cross that these men have taken their car but the manufacturers are also anxious to sell to men - hence the centrality of the male figure, the only one we see driving the car in all these adverts. It is her car yet he has taken it without consent. 'Taking without consent' is the nearest the law gets to defining joyriding. So the men in this series of adverts are 'joyriders' as legally defined. These adverts sum up the relative positions of men and women in 'car culture' today but as we shall see the Peugeot 106 seem more adventurous.

Whilst the Micra adverts refer obliquely to car theft (the poster excepted) others are less subtle. A recent Ford Escort TV advert directly referred to the possibility of theft of the car. Our hero the (male) doctor is visiting a patient (elderly female) on a high-rise estate. We see two youths 'hanging around' on his arrival. He parks the car. Through her net-curtain we catch sight of the young men walking round the car. We 'know' this is a prelude to them stealing it. The patient expresses her concern but the Doctor is confident that his wise purchase will be resist their efforts. The patient is reassured - we are reassured. All will be well. At the same time a campaign in women's magazines advertised the same car also by referring to the fear of theft. The picture shows a young man apparently attempting to break into a car with a screwdriver. The 'worm's eye' view is such that we are looking up at him. His head, and therefore any hope of identifying (with) him is distant and obscure, his feet large. The accompanying slogan claims, 'We've found a way to make some men impotent'; the

screwdriver held level with his genitals is bent. The phallic potency of the woman car owner is threatened but that of the male car manufacturer is such that he can protect 'his' women from 'his' sons.

Whilst women do not get to drive in the Micra adverts discussed above other advertisers allow women to 'borrow' this male possession. Peugeot in their 106 adverts seek to associate their cars with an existing cult film classic which has strong feminist overtones. In the first advert of the series our British 'Thelma' and 'Louise' travel through America parodying episodes in the film. The film features attempted rape, murder in self defence and armed robbery but in the adverts a hairdryer stands in for a gun - it is given to a bald man. The pretensions of other men are punctured with humour. In the adverts the Highway Patrol man does not get locked in the trunk of the car but, he is also treated less than seriously by the heroines. We even discover that one of them has been sleeping with the other's boyfriend but this is overlooked as the pleasure of the trip and the sense of getting away from it all (from men, and, without the hairdryer, femininity?) takes centre stage. Just as the film has lesbian undertones which may be dispelled by the heterosexual activities of the 'couple' so Peugeot's 'buddies' flirt with the men they ridicule. This is a holiday from responsibility, from repercussions, even romance but it is temporary. The fantasy is attached to the car and reality returns all too soon. But they can return anytime they turn the keys in the ignition. However, Spelman and Minow (1995) note that the middle class pleasure in the film - on which the advert is based - is based on the distance achieved by featuring working class women.

The second advert, 'Thelma and Louise in Louisiana', uses the, now established, characters to show off the 106 'Mardi Gras'. In their journey across America they miss a sign banning cars and end up amongst the floats and jazz bands in a New Orleans parade. The 'mistake' allows them, in the spirit of carnival, to drive where they should not. In the parade they also take on the more stereotypical role of women - that of object to be looked at, but make the most of it with a regal wave.

In the film *Thelma and Louise* drive their Thunderbird into the Grand Canyon presumably to their deaths and, more importantly no sequels. In the advert 'Thelma and Louise: The End' our heroines, and their car, are apparently asked to star in a film. Cranking up the postmodern irony the film in which they are to star is clearly *Thelma and Louise*. The set is for the final, fateful, shot where Thelma and Louise outrun the forces of law and order only by ending their lives. When it comes to the shoot it is clear they are only stand-ins (the stunt theme used, not only by Nissan, but in recent Volvo adverts too) for the real stars. Feeling let down our advert heroines drive towards the edge at high speed only to drive through what turns out to be a painted set of the Grand Canyon. Our fears that they too will die prove groundless; a sequel or a series is possible for them. These women do not pay the price that society demands of women who break the law - the criminal law and the laws of gender appropriate behaviour. It is safe and desirable for women to drive men's cars and laugh them to scorn. Buy a 106 be a 'laddette' is the message - identify with the glamour of the film heroines but not the criminal activities portrayed which are comically undermined.

Whilst the film *Thelma and Louise*, may allow no sequel the characters have now appeared in a fourth advert. In this the wide open spaces of Australia - and with it the automotive dystopia of the *Mad Max* films, already pastiched in Fosters Lager adverts - are conjured up. Our brunette heroine dreams that her boyfriend suggests they marry and take off for Australia before returning home to have children. This helpfully reassures women that no lesbian reading is intended - she has a boyfriend, Tony - but also suggests that she is not yet ready to be tied down by domestic responsibility. She is a free agent and her status as a car user guarantees that. She awakens from her reverie to see the boyfriend in drag - with a blonde wig - driving the car. The focus dissolves and the dream ends, it is her blonde friend driving the car. The camera draws back to reveal that they have company - two men and a sheep (!). This final shot initially reassures us that whilst she confuses her best friend with her boyfriend in drag they can both pick up men - literally as passengers. The car is big enough for a couple of hunky Australians - but also raises, and does not dispel the prospect that these are not sheep shearers but sheep shaggers. This advert is the first in which men have been allowed in the



car - albeit in drag or as passengers.

An earlier Peugeot 106 advert featured a female executive sexually harassed at work, returning home only to be met by her husband demanding to know what is for supper. This potentially feminist scenario might be resolved in real life by the woman going to a solicitor, by murder or an affair, but in the advert her solution is none of these; she drives her car out into the desert - on her own. She does not endanger her reputation or body by taking a male companion or her sexuality by taking a female companion. She takes action but only to end up passively sitting in the car. There has been no sequel to this advert.

Nissan Micras are not the only cars to be 'borrowed'. The Renault 5 Campus is so attractive that two Grizzly Bears take one for a drive, making fun of the authority of the Park Ranger like their cartoon ancestors, Yogi and Booboo. Since bears cannot own cars they have taken this one without consent so they too are joyriding. The episode with the bears and much of the advertising discussed here has a strong fantasy element. One reason for this is the Independent Television Commission's Code of Advertising Standards and Practice which (standard 21) states:

- a) No advertisement may encourage or condone dangerous, inconsiderate or competitive driving practices or breaches of the Highway Code.
- b) References to power or acceleration in advertisements for motor cars or automotive products must not imply that speed limits may be exceeded and there must be no accompanying suggestion of excitement or aggression.

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However, their additional guidance (note 4) accepts that 'Sequences which are clearly fantasy ... do not normally cause difficulties'. The argument here is not that these adverts breach the standards in any legal sense but their deconstruction reveals both overt and covert Derridean 'traces' of the suppressed behaviour in which even references to 'safety' signify 'danger'.

The car adverts aimed at women run a risk. Men who drive those cars may feel feminised or women may take the apparent message of autonomy seriously and head off around America on their own or together - riding for joy? The stereotypical 'danger' of women taking the wheel

is their alleged bad driving. The motoring offence figures - in 1994 96% of those found guilty of causing death or bodily harm were men and 97% for dangerous driving (Home Office 1995) - give the lie to this but surely no advertiser is going to try and sell women cars by raising this canard.

The nearest that an advertiser comes to suggesting that women are bad drivers is the latest Fiat Punto advert, but it does so, only to resoundingly quash it. A man awakes to realize that his girlfriend has already got up. We flash back to her driving. He is nagging, 'mirror', 'signal' from the passenger seat. We flash forward to her driving round the courtyard where she has placed objects of particular sentimental value to him to form an auto test. She races amongst the 'cones' formed by his guitar and record player (the same as those thrown out of the house in the Nissan advert?). He comes down to the courtyard (having put on her night dress in his panic) and embraces her admitting she is a good driver.

What remains the same in car adverts whoever they are aimed at is the obviousness of the need for a car. So much is obvious in all advertising. However, not only is the particular model of car the one that should be bought these adverts advertise motoring more generally - the freedom of the open road. That freedom to drive is, in reality, increasingly hedged around with regulations, road works and other traffic - hence both joyriding and road rage - yet car advertising hardly acknowledges this change. Those adverts that do recognize these frustrations then play on the quality of their seats, in car entertainment systems or air-conditioning. The analysis of car adverts above suggests the freedom from constraint promised by driving raises the same freedom from constraint that is elsewhere called joyriding. This possibility is raised in the adverts but disavowed - only partially? - through humour and fantasy.

The disrupted gender conventions in the ongoing Peugeot *Thelma and Louise* adverts may require the sort of exegesis that has attended the film itself. The reference to joyriding in the Nissan adverts could not be much clearer but in the most recent one it is made yet more

explicit. The opening shot is black and white - it is a CCTV monitor recording the progress of a young man around a car lot. The voice-over refers to the way to take away a car. The man tries the handle, gets in. The picture becomes full colour as the salesman offers him the keys for a test drive. Normality - legal and chromatic - is restored. Moreover, no woman appears in this advert so the gender regime is restored too.

None of this is to argue that car adverts cause car crime or bad driving far less represent an outbreak of feminism. They do, however, form part of a 'car culture' which both influences and is in turn is influenced by people's car use. In short, cars are often stolen for the same reason that they are bought and they are largely bought for the reasons hinted at in advertising. Cars can be seen as a 'magical solution' more widely. The extent of implicit and explicit support for unnecessary, illegal or carefree/careless driving in advertisements, popular and high culture and years of observation of my own and others driving suggests that the term 'car culture' is inadequate and that the expression 'joyriding culture' might be more appropriate. We live in a 'joyriding culture' which encourages all men and some women drivers to see the realization of their emotional satisfactions - hence *roadrage* and *joyriding* - through ownership or use of a car.

Lyng and Mitchell (1995) persuasively argue that the Harley-Davidson motor cycle company drew on the 'outlaw', Hells Angels image of the criminalised 'one percent' in its return to profitability and expansion into clothes and perfumes. The bikes were technically inferior to Japanese ones but sold on image. Cars too are sold - and stolen - on image. The argument here is that whilst cars are advertised in ways that draw on legitimate - but increasingly questioned - activities such as motor racing or enjoyment of the countryside the connection with more 'subterranean' pleasures or joys cannot be easily disavowed.

An example from a completely opposed theoretical tradition illustrates some of these issues. Clarke (1996) seeks to argue the relevance of opportunity reduction against 'crimes by the public'; to do this he shows that where detection rates are low and opportunities widespread



deviance and conformity fall into a normal distribution. The example he chooses - and he recognises the danger of trying to extrapolate from it - is speeding by cars and trucks in Illinois. Whilst he persuasively argues for normal distribution from a mass (nearly 22 million) of observations he passes very lightly over the extent of offending revealed. The median speed accorded well with the speed limit (65 mph for cars and 55 for trucks) but the normal distribution means roughly equal numbers of offenders and non-offenders. Indeed, as Clarke notes in a footnote, whilst 3 million traffic and parking offences were brought before the courts of Illinois:

this is less than the total number of speeding infractions observed in the present samples, which were collected for only a portion of the year (four one-week periods) at ten monitoring stations on only one class of highway (the rural interstates consisting of 1,760 miles of roadway). (1996:175)

Adding in the missing weeks and the missing miles - and not counting those who normally speed but were only counted conforming - adds up to massive law breaking in the face of, what Clarke notes are, "significant legal penalties and insurance costs" (1996:174).

Further evidence for the pervasiveness of car culture and joyriding in cultural products are widespread. In an article in *Mizz* magazine ('Would you accept a lift from these boys?' Issue 213, 26 May - 8 June 1993) quotes from Paul, Jamie, Perry, Richard, and James (their real names were used in the article) give some insight into joyriding and the ways in which the motor project helped them stop stealing cars. These quotes could have come from either my fieldnotes or the literature discussed in Chapter 2 but there is additional material. Some of that material is in the text but the rest has to be 'read' from the pictures and the context of the magazine. It is clear that the magazine wanted a 'hook' that would attract its young women readers.<sup>6</sup> The front cover 'come on' screams "JOYRIDERS - THE FRIGHTENING TRUTH - Don't get in a car with these boys" yet the preamble to the article more teasingly suggests a certain romantic heroism, "...Jenny Cockle talks to the boys who were prepared to sacrifice

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6. See Chapter 6 for fieldnotes on the journalist's visit. It would have interesting to have gained access to the response of those readers. A request to the magazine's editor to canvass their opinions went unanswered.

their freedom for the sake of impressing the girls in a flashy motor...". Not only does this run contrary to the literature's emphasis on the personal 'buzz' to be gained from joyriding or the pressure of mates but misrepresents the balance of the interviews. Only James (aged 16) talks about girls:

nicking cars really helps you get into nightclubs, especially if you pull up in a nice Sierra or something. If me and my mates ended up taking some girls home afterwards, we used to stick a cab aerial on the back so that if we were chased by the police, the people in the back could say they thought they were getting a cab.

Moreover, the boys chosen for the interviews and picture were neither the youngest or oldest but all 16 and 17. They are arranged leaning on a car looking up at the camera much like a pop group posing for publicity pictures. Given the target market of the magazine and its normal content the boys are commodified as surely as those pop groups, and despite - or indeed, because of - the 'warning' about them they are glamorised.

The literature on youth culture frequently makes much of the soundtrack that music provides and often those youth cultures centre on a particular musical style - such as punk or gansta rap. The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJPO) was in part prompted by a moral panic about 'rave' culture and specifically attempts to give a legal definition to the musical style by reference to 'repetitive beats'. One of the leading bands that makes such music is the Prodigy.

Their album 'Music For The Jilted Generation (XL Recordings XL114) features tracks which celebrate youth culture and its resistance to the law. Reviewing it in the Times (!) (16 July 1994), David Sinclair, writes:

Liam Howlett, the young producer and keyboard operative better known as the Prodigy, is not the first popular musician who has presumed to speak for a generation. Pete Townsend articulated the frustration of the mods in the 1960s [..]. An intrinsic part of such an exercise is the drawing up of battle lines. The picture on the inner sleeve of the Prodigy's album, which has topped the chart in its week of release, shows a large gathering of youths in a field, defending a pair of skyscraper speaker stacks from a warlike posse of

police in full riot gear. The jilted generation's fight for the right to party starts here. The music is dressed up along similarly confrontational lines. The turbo-charged techno rhythms and ululating vocal calls [...] are freighted with a quasi-revolutionary message of defiance. Disrespect for the law is a recurring theme, from the sampled noise of a smashed window which measures out each bar of "Break And Enter" to the racing pulse of "Speedway (Theme From Fastlane)" which glorifies the perilous pleasures of joyriding.

Further the cover notes also include this message from the band, "HOW CAN THE GOVERNMENT STOP YOUNG PEOPLE HAVING A GOOD TIME. FIGHT THIS BOLLOCKS." and the track titled 'Their Law' opens with the words "What we are talking about here is a total lack of respect for the law" and is the 'repetitive beats' are occasionally interrupted by chants of "Fuck them and their law". The track on joyriding that Sinclair refers to could as easily be about motor racing as the major sampled sound is that of a speeding car approaching and receding but the other sampled sound of a car alarm gives the game away.

There are a number of problems with the Prodigy's position here. Whilst their music is popular with the age group most involved with joyriding the literature on joyriding makes no mention of music and my observations suggest no particular allegiance to one musical style over another. The road safety literature does, however, relate use of in-car entertainment to bad driving (AA, 1992) but again makes no mention of musical style. Such considerations have not prevented compilations of music to drive to being marketed under the BBC motoring programme *Top Gear* name. The second problem is that of politics. Whilst joyriders may support rave culture - or, at least, the right to party - and many take drugs their adherence to car culture sits uneasily with other 'greener' parts of youth culture associated with 'rave' culture and others criminalised by the CJPO such as hunt saboteurs and anti-road protestors etc. Pop music offers another version in Pulp's *Joyriders* "Mr we just want your car cos we're taking a girl to the Reservoir" but conclude "It's a tragedy" (*get frisky with PULP* Loose Records 1995)

It is political naivety to equate the right to party with a right to joyride. Irrespective it shows the entry of joyriding into popular culture. Another example is the film *Shopping* which features the lives of Billy, Jo, Monkey and Be Bop who ramraid. It was not critically well received. Hailed



as the Welsh *Trainspotting* (drug culture as normal) *Twin Town* features joyriding in Swansea. More complex is *Car* is a three part dance programme performed by the six women comprising the Cholmondeleys; choreographed by Lea Anderson it comprises parts: 'Car Wars'; '15 minutes of Fame' and 'Dada Eco-Car (a respiration comedy)'. It has played free (sponsored by Saab) to outdoor audiences in a dozen venues, including a Saab dealership! Each part stands on its own but all centre on a car which is the subject of the pieces but also physically a platform, a prop and barre for the dancers individually and in ensemble. The performance (3pm Sunday 20 August 1995, Royal Festival Hall) is reviewed with additional material from an article on 'The Motor Car in Art' by Peter Conrad (The Observer, 16 July 1995).

In 'Car Wars' the car arrives. It is driven and occupied by the dancers wearing tight, rouched black outfits which only reveal the eyes and mouth. The early movements suggest the effects of speed on the human body but on coming to rest the occupants dark clothes and watchful air might be that of bank robbers. They writhe in and out of every door and the boot like so many maggots.

In '15 minutes of Fame' the dancers are dressed as Jackie Onassis Kennedy reminding us of what Conrad calls her "bad trip in a motorcade". They pose, they pout, they wave regally from the car and slither over the car not like maggots but models. They bask in the glare of a flashlight for their fifteen minutes then turn it interrogatively on the other occupants of the car like so many police officers looking into steamed-up cars. All the time the opened boot window is being decorated with celebrated 'car' victims such as James Dean and JFK but not Barthes, who likened the car to a cathedral but was more mundanely run down by a laundry truck.

The final part 'Dada Eco-Car (a respiration comedy)' most clearly suggests a critique of the car. As the subtitle suggests and the throat clutching, eye-covering, heart-pounding, pulse-checking and retching actions of the increasingly hyper dancers underlines cars kill in more ways than one. It is also in this section that the most literal interpretation is offered as placards

are shown to the audience. They read: '100 yards'; '50 yards'; 'CRASH'; 'JOY-RIDE'; DRIVE BY SHOOTING'; 'RAM RAID'. Only 'ROAD RAGE' and 'ASTHMA' are missing.

Moreover, the official use of media in the form of road safety and car crime prevention campaigns can also be subject to the cultural readings. The use by the Home Office (1988) of the expression 'macho' and 'unmanly' by Cooper (1989) and newspaper condemnations of the Sunday Times (11 September 1994) of 'foolish boys' suggest that there is a recognition - at one level - of the reality of male involvement. However, this is the angry Father talking to his boisterous sons or the voice of hegemonic masculinity to subordinated masculinity. However, slightly more subtle uses of this recognition of specific masculinities can be found in Hackney Safer Cities street poster advertising campaign against street robbery. Aware of the racist use of crime statistics for 'mugging' but also recognising that involvement they use the language of the street to suggest that it is 'manly' not to mug with the slogan "Respect not Robbery". This is a positive invitation to resume the 'cool pose' of black masculinity not a challenge to that manliness.

Further, but unexpected, cultural products of car culture are the poems of the children exposed to the anti-joyriding message of Theatre Adad. One is quoted at the head of this chapter. Some further examples are discussed below. A wider message on driving can be read from this poem that doesn't explicitly mention joyriding.

This a rap all about death  
 People dying without a last breath  
 Screeching on the concrete wall  
 they're not really tough at all.  
 It's hard to believe this all goes on.  
 Very short lives now they're gone  
 This is our message to you out there  
 to all you people cause care.

More didactic and bloody but reminiscent of anti-drug slogans.

Safe driving is a must  
 or you might get bust,  
 Don't go fast around the bend  
 or you might lose your best friend,

Don't go joyriding if you care  
 or you might end up a wheel chair  
 You must be nuts  
 If you want us to see your guts  
 So just say,  
 NO!!!

Equally hard-hitting is this contribution which reflects the reality of peer pressure and holds out the prospect of heavenly judgement.

This is a story all about me,  
 How my life was mucked up  
 when I saw a car key,  
 I stood there staring, daring  
 if I should,  
 My friends provoked me to  
 drive around the wood,  
 I jumped in the car sped  
 all around,  
 Then I ran into a river and  
 then I drowned,  
 I went up to heaven but  
 they said 'NO' you belong  
 down below.

A more earthly justice is handed out in this rap.

There was once two boys (men) who thought they were Flash so they stole a car and gave it a bash. they thought they were rude they thought they were bad but they were really mad. they were going to fast round the Bend they made an accident they couldn't Mead (mend). They went to court Felling right divs now they are banged up in the nick.<sup>7</sup>

### Policy Implications

Simply derived from the recognition that motor projects can help young men stop stealing or reduce the numbers of cars they steal and the manner in which they are driven one obvious policy recommendation would be to increase resources for motor projects. Recognising the extent to which motor manufacturers are 'responsible' through poor car security and increasing both the desire and practical need for the car a levy might be suggested on motor

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7. The more scatological last stanza of the other version scans better, "They went to court felling right pricks now there banged up in the nick."



manufacturers to support these and other efforts at crime prevention and road safety.

Already these proposals extend across disciplinary and funding boundaries without taking on board issues around: class, 'race', gender, sexuality and the environment. It is the contention of much of this thesis that joyriding should be seen holistically within car culture and so solutions should be too. However, for practical reasons they are discussed below separately. Put bluntly though - and making explicit the lurking positivism in my argument - whatever policies are applied to the car will determine car use, including all illegal car uses such as what is known as joyriding.

The appointment of John Prescott as Deputy Prime Minister in the incoming Labour Government with responsibility for overseeing policy on transport and the environment is welcome. The Guardian (6 May 1997) notes "the Labour government will end the Conservatives 18-year-old love affair with the car and tilt the balance in favour of public transport." The, Jaguar-driving Prescott, is recorded as saying "We want to improve public transport and make it more attractive so that people will use their cars less". The first moves in this direction were reported in neo-Orwellian terms "Two wheels good, four wheels bad: Business set out vision for green commuting with bike loans, public transport and car sharing" (The Independent, 5 June 1997). The report set out the plans of seven companies (including the Royal Mail, Boots and NatWest Bank) to reduce car use by their employees. Hewlett-Packard's Bristol staff are expected to use bicycles 20%, public transport 7% and car sharing 70% of the time for commuting. In the same month the Royal Automobile Club has relaunched itself as a mobility rather than motoring organisation. Indeed this 'wise use' form of environmental thinking may not be dominant but has increasing utility for companies that can no longer embrace 'environmental management', nor face State controlled 'ecological modernism' in the face of calls for 'environmental justice' (Harvey, 1996).

Returning to advertising we see some of these themes played out in the latest BT and the Fiat Bravo adverts. BT have good business reasons for apparently subversively asking: "Why not

change the way we work?". Their telecommunications business can only benefit from giving up private car use, and indeed public transport. The posters ask the question over pictures of massive traffic jams (often sited on jam-prone, sclerotic, arterial roads) or huge queues on train station platforms. Fiat's advert unconsciously undermines the need for a car in using an internet theme. We only ever see the cars on the computer screen; secondly, even then, they are not pictured on a road but on a concreted or tarmac area where they can perform their *car de deux* and finally why would we need a car if we were 'hooked-up' to the Net? The man in the advert clearly works at home. (Groombridge, 1998)

If car adverts are revealing so much anxiety about car use then there should be no need to ban them, but like cigarette advertising (note the close connection with motor racing) it should be considered. More ludic suggestions would look to the many feminist and environmental graffiti campaigns against poster adverts. A more radical use of the law might see a return to the 'Red Flag Acts' requiring each car to have three attendants. Plans for car sharing and legally enforced 'full-cars-only' lanes (like bus lanes) are echoes of this legislation.

It is a pity that the intertwined nature of transport and environment is noted without noting the interplay of the car with crime and crime prevention too. Cars are the site of crime, a source of crime, transport for crime and the divider of communities into car-owning and non-car owning classes as well as (through road building) the creator of townscapes which give rise to fear - one of the main reasons for not using public transport is fear of crime. A rare exception are Hamilton and Hoyle who consider the following in their discussion of transport policy:

Out of their cars, people would become more visible, and we could feel, and be, safer. Children could be able to play on the street. The attraction of living in cities would increase. Money could be saved by the disappearance of car-crime, and of the carnage on the roads. Police-time could be directed away from motorways. (1997:96)

Clearly, if taking and driving away cars is about how some young men construct their own masculinity within a car culture then both masculinity and car culture should be in the dock too. The Government's strategy has been to: improve the security of cars by privately

embarrassing the motor manufacturers to take some responsibility for appropriate levels of security for purchases that rival houses for their expenditure; 'outmacho' offenders in the toughness of penal sanctions and further alienate them by likening them to hyenas and metaphorically telling any motorist who fails to take their crime prevention advice that 'they asked for it'. This or similar approaches are proposed for all crimes and have been widely criticised by criminologists, penal reform groups, judges and clergy.

Subjects to the caveats of temporary support for motor projects the main conclusions of this thesis locate the problem of joyriding well outside the narrow concerns of the criminal justice system it is for these reasons that other areas like education, transport and environment policy are briefly explored below.

Building on the work of Ignition (see Chapter 1) it is essential that education about the car and road safety be incorporated into the curriculum at an early stage but there is a real danger that with such schemes being backed by motoring organisations and sponsored by motor manufacturers the emphasis will be on the safe use of cars rather than problematising the safety and utility of the car itself. Just as the Vegetarian Society and the Meat and Livestock Commission fight over the right to propagandise in the classroom so Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth will need to move the debate beyond road safety to the safety of the road. Linking in transport policy would see fewer children being driven to school by their harassed parents and therefore less exposure to their bad driving habits.

Under education it is also necessary to consider the early years experience of children, especially boys. Parenting, particularly by men needs to address these issues. Everyone understands the issues involved in the debate about toy guns yet no-one questions the appearance of cars in childrens' stories - often driven by animals! - or the huge numbers of toy cars bought for or given to boys. It is not enough to say that families need fathers as some on the right say but to explore what being a man means (Salisbury and Jackson, 1996).

Jones (1993) proposes a radical rethink of the problem of car crime. He suggests: improved



income for young people; lowering the minimum driving age; state funded insurance for young drivers; cheap and efficient public transport; a new range of low cost vehicles; and a whole range of welfare measures related to housing, employment and training. Most of these suggestions are consonant with the findings of this research.

However, there remain problems. Surely we don't want anymore cars or any more young and experienced drivers. As it is there are lots of cars, they are easy to steal and expensive to run legally. Access to cars then is rationed by money. It is also rationed by age. This is clearly not a fair way to ration access to something that everyone either wants or has become dependent upon (joyriders as much as the motorised sales force). Moreover, if public transport was not only good but popular then there would be less need to take cars solely to get from A to B and fewer cars to steal but given the attractions of car culture it is doubtful whether busses would attract joyriders, those that work with them, many men and increasing numbers of women. That said public transport is to be supported in its own right.

#### Further research: the remaining gaps

Specific policy-orientated research aimed at informing the policy issues discussed above is clearly needed. Moreover, many of the issues raised in Chapter 3 have gone unanswered in the attempt to theorize how men should research men (Chapter 4), how definitions of joyriding should be broadened (Chapter 5), how motor projects do work, but do so contrary to the long term aims of feminism and the environment (Chapter 6) and how masculinity has been dealt with implicitly and explicitly in criminology (Chapter 7). Furthermore new questions have arisen.

It is clear that in dealing with many of these issues theoretically the aetiological element is absent; but neither was the hypothesis that joyriding is done because it is easy and fun and may yield a profit contradicted. The comparative element is missing too. Issues of 'race' and gender have been raised but gone unexplored. The reading of car culture suggests that

black men and all women have been excluded from its expressive elements or those expressive elements find other forms than joyriding. It has not been possible to test these hypotheses but a useful purpose has been served in raising them as the current literature studies only the joyriding that comes before its eyes.

Clearly too, the whole concept of car culture demands international comparisons. Is joyriding different in the United States or the various countries of continental Europe because of different car cultures? This has been suggested but remains untested. Wolf (1996) sets out some of the different histories (and therefore cultures) of transport usage in the United States and Europe but discusses joyriding as if it only appeared in Britain in 1991 before spreading to Germany later. Reference to the history in Chapter 1, the work of Gibbens (1958) or even Hartley's (1994) antipodean reading reveals the error here. These errors aside it is interesting that both joyriding and, indeed, road rage are treated as part of the history of transport.

As the analysis of car advertisements at various points have indicated, and the futurist Mr Toad confirms, the main reason for buying, renting or stealing a car may be rationalised as transport but this neutral mobility may also be analysed as transgression. Another direction which this thesis could have taken would have been to take the issue of mobility more seriously. This would have allowed for a consideration of whether the Internet and mobile phones are the new driving/joyriding. Once the preserve of yuppies and drug dealers the mobile 'phone is fast becoming an essential item. Small and light it is often stolen from cars but eventually communications technology offers the prospect of a virtual mobility. This seemingly democratic movement will, however, contain gendered, class, 'race' and age structures within which action is taken. Some will seek to live within those structures through theft or fraud.

It is a further irony that whilst some look to the future with mobile phones, computer hacking and the internet as ways forward others are returning to the past. Chapter 5 opened with a quote on the pleasures of riding a horse. Those pleasures have not diminished but remain class-based, which might explain the response of the authorities to the apparent increase

reported in the Guardian (13 June 1997) of horse riding by young people in a working class estate near Cardiff. Gwent police are considering using the Town Police Causes Act 1847 against 'furious riding'. The headline is "Neighbours rein in joyriders of the Wild West of Wales" and PC Ewan Jones is reported as saying,

A lot of these riders don't even have a saddle for their horses. We have clamped down on motor cycle riding and this is the result of that. Some youths worked out that you don't need tax or documents for these animals.

A traditional criminological explanation of this might concentrate on the 'buzz' of riding a horse. That would be sufficient for many, particularly policy makers. However, the approach taken here would emphasize the class issues of horse ownership and the not-unproblematic issue of car-versus-horse ecology but might particularly want to examine how the usual association of horses and ponies with girls was squared by the boys. One potential explanation is hinted at in the coverage - the counter association of horses with cowboys.

### Conclusion

The intention was never to seek an etiology of joyriding - like Ruggiero (1996 & 1997), I question etiologies of 'deficit' - but this thesis has clearly moved on from a simple attempt to problematise joyriding. A long-term aim had also been to contribute to a nascent 'green criminology'. Here it has not been possible to move towards that but an underpinning green sentiment has informed the discussion of 'joyriding culture' and has provided a standpoint which stands outside the 'subjective' but differs from the traditional standpoint of the social 'scientist'. It was always obvious - though unremarked - that masculinity had something to do with car use and car crime. It was not clear when I started that so much of the thesis would relate to masculinities in theory and practice.

In short three theses have been presented here: first, a critical criminological account of a real problem (joyriding); second, a policy-oriented discussion of one means of dealing with joyriding (motor projects) and; third, a contribution to the ongoing critique of criminology for its



failure to focus on issues of gender in theory and methodology. An old metaphor relates to the difficulty of riding two horses; here my difficulty has been driving three cars. In this context the extent to which these vehicles are in future taken, with or without my consent, will be the measure of my success. The worst fate would be to be permanently parked in a library.

The final conclusion from this attempt to 'do' criminology is that criminology fundamentally misperceives itself. From the proto-criminologies of conservatism and classicism through biological and psychological positivism, sociological positivism (including its sub-cultural variants), conflict, marxist, radical, critical, administrative or control theories to the cynicism of right realism and the continued optimism of left realism, criminology has either sought to explain crime, criminals or criminalisation. Feminist perspectives have rightly criticised all those attempts for their sexism but, as Heidensohn (1994) gloomily notes, have not supplemented, let alone supplanted the criminological mainstream.

Whilst some standpoint feminists might reject criminology because of its specifically masculine bias others (Smart, 1990) reject it for its modernism, specifically its incipient positivism. However, both the discipline and its feminist critics share a conception of criminology; the concept that criminology presents to the world. Whether it seeks to explain, interpret, deconstruct, cure or correct crime, criminality, criminal justice or criminalisation, criminology - in its various guises - resolutely focusses on crime, deviance, censure or problematic situations. This, of course, seems obvious. Do not all disciplines focus on the subject of that discipline? Maybe, but, like the watched pot that never boils crime is too elusive for such single-minded study. When we focus exclusively on crime we often learn more about class, 'race', gender, sexuality, power, the media. Criminology is a lens which brings many things into focus. What it fails to bring into focus is 'crime'.

Smart (1990:84) may conclude that "it is very hard to see what criminology has to offer feminism" but ironically her work has found a voice within criminology. Perhaps, the reason that she is so perceptive about crime and criminology is because she has turned her back on

it, only occasionally spinning round to catch it running away. In that moment she sees more than those who confront it head-on. Equally, whilst her postmodern feminism necessarily employs a compound lens it often reveals more about the periphery (crime and criminology being only one example) of her gaze than what she is looking at. Cain (1990a) talks about looking outside criminology - to transgress it - to bring about the successor science, others see criminology as a rendezvous subject where experts from other disciplines look in and move on. Whether looking in or out, 'crime' continues to elude us. My attempts to study the crime of joyriding ended up illuminating car culture and masculinities. More might have been learnt about the 'crime' of joyriding by catching glimpses of it from elsewhere, from other perspectives.

Collier (1995) comes close to recognising some of this. He notes that "the 'respectable' masculinity of the man of law was set against something else; the irresponsible and sexually licentious 'dangerous classes' " (209) and "as criminologists we come up against our familiar friend (or enemy?) time and again - the 'unreconstructed' (a telling phrase) 'dangerous' masculinities of a 'wild' and 'disorderly male youth.'" (210). He may talk about being a criminologist but his work on the construction in law of the family man and his deconstruction of the politics surrounding single motherhood, the valorisation of 'father-presence' and the operations of the Child Support Agency actually tells us much more about crime and criminology than had he focussed on them.

Collier's work on 'family man' and this thesis all in their different way look mostly at masculinities but in the area of law and crime, without concentrating on law and crime. Thus, unlike Smart, I am not suggesting a break with criminology but certainly a break from criminology. During that break the main concern should be men and masculinities but given the observations of feminists on the similarities between masculinity and crime it will not be surprising that the areas in which men and masculinities might best be studied will be where they deviate, break the law, commit crime, police, prosecute and investigate crime, even do criminology. However, this should not be seen as a return to ongoing Boy's Own stories. Women must not

be ignored in this but neither should they just be 'added in' nor compared to men but we should also recognize that criminology's 'other' is not 'woman' but 'criminal'.

And despite being a white, middle-age, middle-class, straight, house-owning, car-owning male I too make the claim to be an exile and agree with Naffine's closing words:

The final message of this story, then, is a simple one, though modern criminology has found it difficult to grasp. The most pressing intellectual and ethical obligation on those of us who wish to persist with the study of crime, its meanings and reasons, is to bring women (and other exiles) in from the cold. In order to know more about who we are as criminologists, about the very nature of our enterprise and whether it is worth pursuing at all, we need to open up the conventional borders of the discipline. We must let the exile bear witness. (1997:153)



## APPENDIX 1

### Questionnaire to members of agencies using TRAX

Dear Magistrate, Social Worker, Youth Worker or Probation Officer

I have been asked by the TRAX Motor Project to evaluate their work, except for the Car Crime Programme which is already monitored and evaluated by Oxfordshire Probation Service. However, because it forms an integral part of the project I cannot, and would not want to, avoid forming some judgement on that too.

I have already interviewed a number of police, magistrates, youth workers, social workers and teachers about the project and regularly attend the project to observe it in action. However, to get a wider picture would be grateful if you could spend a little time answering a few questions in the strictest confidence on car crime, its prevention and punishment.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me at the address or 'phone above. You may want to know that I am a lecturer in sociology at St Mary's University College, University of Surrey and am studying part-time for my PhD in Car Crime. I was formerly a Home Office Civil Servant.

If you could complete the questions below and over then return this letter to me I would be most grateful.

Yours sincerely

Nic Groombridge

- 1 Are you A Magistrate, Social Worker, Youth Worker or Probation Officer?
- 2 Have you heard of the TRAX project?
- 3 How did you hear of TRAX?
- 4 How would you describe what it does?
- 5 Have you recommended that someone attend it? a) voluntarily or b) as part of an order.
- 6 Have you been kept informed of their progress?
- 7 Will you recommend people go there again?
- 8 If not, why not?
- 9 Is TRAX the answer to car crime? Yes/No
- 10 What other measures might be taken? (please elaborate) punitive, welfare or crime prevention
- 11 Do you see car crime as a particular problem for your agency?
- 12 Has it changed over time? How?
- 13 Do you think that the TRAX project has had a part to play in any reduction in car crime?

- 14 If you are in contact with people who have attended TRAX have you noticed any change in them that might be attributed to TRAX?
- 15 How much do you agree with the following statements? (Please write agree, disagree, don't know or not sure)

Car crime is caused by society.

Car crime is caused by the car.

Car crime is caused by the media.

Car crime is caused by lack of things to do.

Car crime is caused by lack of jobs.

Car crime could be prevented by prison.

Car crime could be prevented by reducing the age for driving.

Car crime could be prevented by decreasing the cost of motoring.

Car crime could be prevented by improved public transport.

Car crime could be prevented by better education about cars at school.

Car crime could be prevented by more projects like TRAX.

**APPENDIX 2**

**Questionnaire to TRAX members**

Dear TRAX member

As you may know I have been asked to work out whether TRAX works, why it works and how it might work better. I would like your help. I would therefore be grateful if you could answer some questions about yourself, TRAX and car crime.

If you decide to help me you have my absolute assurance that the information will be treated **CONFIDENTIALLY**. It will not be shown to TRAX staff or management, Police, Probation or any other agency. Information will be gathered together to give an overall, but anonymous, picture to those agencies to help them make decisions about TRAX. You do not need to identify yourself at all.

Please fill in or tick below as appropriate.

Thank you.

Nic Groombridge

- 1      How old are you?      –
- 2      Are you at:              --school  
                                     --unemployed  
                                     --on a training programme or at College  
                                     --in work
- 3      How did you hear about TRAX?  
                                     --saw it in papers  
                                     --from friends  
                                     --from social worker/probation officer  
                                     --sent by Court  
                                     --previously attended TRAX Car Crime Programme  
                                     --other (please specify)
- 4      How long have you been coming to TRAX? --months.
- 5      Describe briefly in your own words what is best about TRAX.
- 6      What did you do before you started coming to TRAX. (tick as many as are appropriate)  
                                     --hanging about  
                                     --youth club  
                                     --pub/club  
                                     --take cars  
                                     --other (please specify)
- 7      What do you want to do in the future?
- 8      How does TRAX help you with that?
- 9      What more could TRAX do to help you?
- 10     Do you think TRAX helps reduce car crime generally? Yes/No



- 11 Has TRAX helped you? (tick as many as are appropriate)
- drive more safely
  - know more about cars
  - know more about yourself
  - know more about society
  - to stop taking cars
- 12 Do you have any cautions or convictions for car crime? (Please specify below.)
- number
  - type
- 13 Do you have any cautions or convictions for other crime? (Please specify below.)
- number
  - type
- 14 Are you on probation or supervision at the moment?
- 15 How much do you agree with the following statements? (Please write agree, disagree, don't know or not sure)

Car crime is caused by society.  
 Car crime is caused by the car.  
 Car crime is caused by the media.  
 Car crime is caused by careless motorists.  
 Car crime is caused by lack of things to do.  
 Car crime is caused by lack of jobs.  
 Car crime is caused by people like me.  
 Car crime is caused by me.

Car crime could be prevented by prison.  
 Car crime could be prevented by reducing the age for driving.  
 Car crime could be prevented by decreasing the cost of motoring.  
 Car crime could be prevented by improved public transport.  
 Car crime could be prevented by better education about cars at school.  
 Car crime could be prevented by more projects like TRAX.  
 Car crime could be prevented by persuading people to lock their cars.

Joyriding is for boys/men.  
 Joyriding is for young men.  
 Joyriding is done by white men.  
 Joyriding is fun.  
 Joyriding is dangerous.  
 Joyriding is just a fashion.  
 Drugs are more of a problem than joyriding.  
 Joyriding can keep some people out of worse trouble.

**APPENDIX 3****TRAX Interview framework**

- Q1** How did you/your organisation see the problem of car crime in Oxford two years ago?
- Q2** Had there been an ongoing problem that steadily grew worse? Or, was there some sudden significant change in quantity or style?
- Q3** What had your organisation been be trying to do about car crime? Alone or in some multi-agency partnership?
- Q4** Did you/your organisation welcome the development of TRAX?
- Q5** What expectations did you have of TRAX? Did TRAX themselves raise any expectations?
- Q6** Have your expectations been met? Or, have changed your views on the nature of the problem to be faced and how it might be dealt with?
- Q7** What improvements might TRAX make in its programmes for those involved in car crime or services to your organisation.
- Q8** Given what you know about car crime what do you think the best way to stop it is?

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